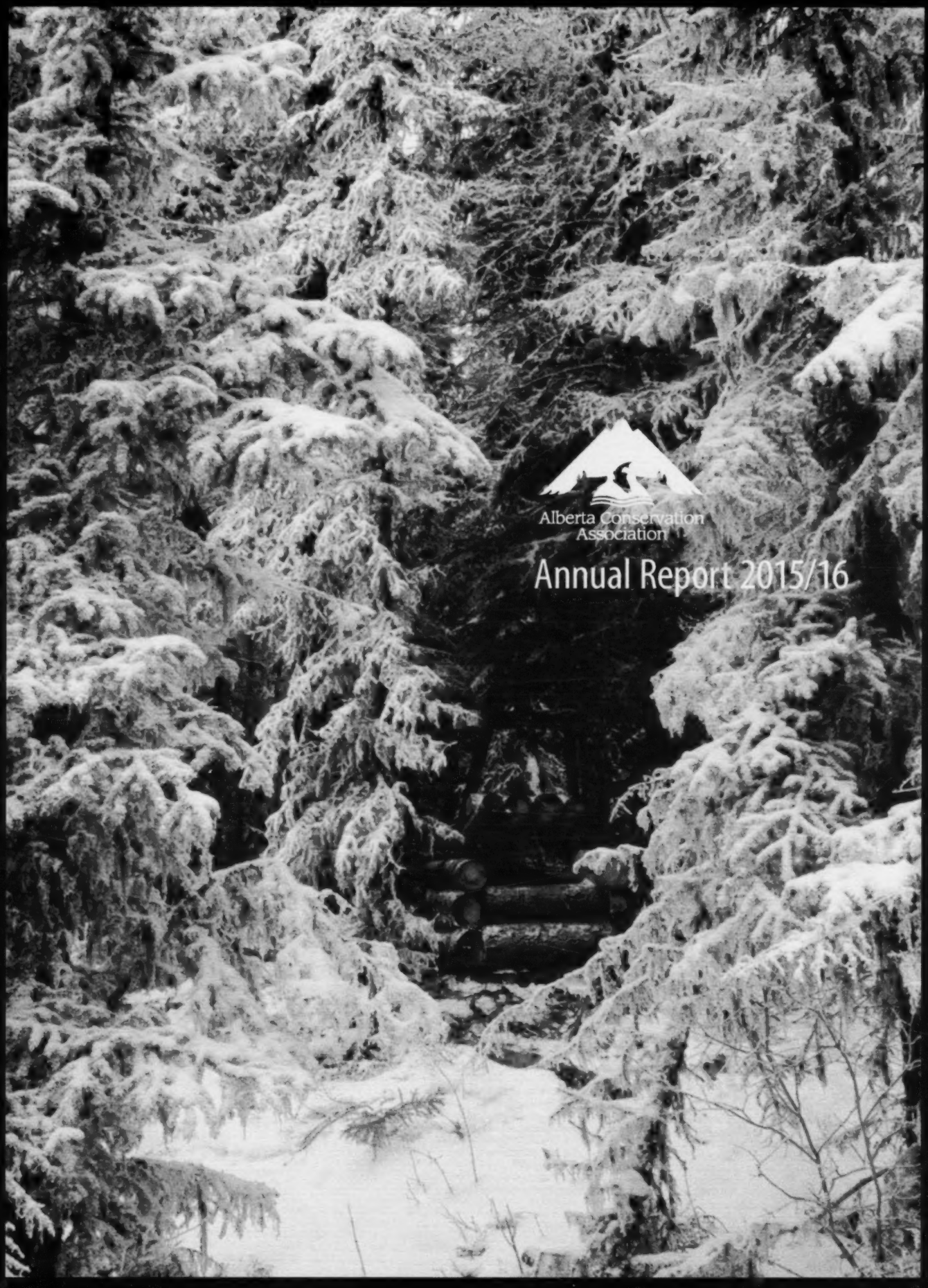
Alberta Conservation Association
Annual Report 2015/16

2015/16 Snapshot

- 97.5 percent of employees agree they are satisfied with ACA as a place to work.
- 9 companies have signed on or increased their ongoing support for ACA programs or projects.
- The Fall/Winter 2015 issue of *Conservation Magazine* was a finalist in the Alberta Magazine awards.
- Taber Pheasant Festival won an Alto Award for Outstanding Sustainable Tourism from Travel Alberta.
- Camera images and hair samples were collected from wolverines determining that there may be different wolverine genetic types.
- 63 kids participated in the 4-H Raise and Release program, raising 5,350 chicks.
- ACA added brown trout into seven waterbodies providing anglers greater diversity in their fishing experience.
- Planted 120,000 trees and shrubs on conservation sites.
- 814 charges laid from Report A Poacher calls.
- Volunteer Amphibian Monitoring Program (AVAMP) submitted 80 amphibian and ten reptile observations.
- Received $3.5 million in non-levy revenue.
- ACA, along with 57 different sponsors at 15 different Kids Can Catch events, provided 2,456 people the opportunity to learn to fish.
- Funded over 1.7 million dollars for our Granting Programs.

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ab-conservation.com/publications

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Annual Report 2015/16

Alberta Conservation Association

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

Our Vision

An Alberta with an abundance and diversity of wildlife, fish and their habitats; where future generations continue to use, enjoy and value our rich outdoor heritage.

Our Mission

ACA conserves, protects and enhances fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for Albertans to enjoy, value and use.

Abbreviations Index

ac	acre
cm	centimetre
h	hour
ha	hectare
km	kilometre
km^2	square kilometre
mm	millimetre

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Cover Photo: Wolverine Trap
Photo: ACA, Mike Jokinen

Alberta Conservation Association

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

Member Groups

Alberta Fish & Game Association

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association

Alberta Professional Outfitters Society

Alberta Trappers' Association

Nature Alberta

Pheasants Forever, Alberta Council

Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

Trout Unlimited Canada

Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta

Board of Directors 2015/16

Executive

Pat Long, Chairman, Wild Sheep Foundation Alberta

Brian Bildson, Vice Chairman – Public At Large, Business Representative

Bill Abercrombie, Secretary – Alberta Trappers' Association

Robert Gruszecki, Treasurer – Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association

Tom Bateman, Past Chair – Southern Alberta Board Liaison

Directors

Ken Ambrock – Northern Alberta Board Liaison

Dr. Mark Boyce – ACA/University of Alberta Chair in Fisheries and Wildlife

Fred Calverley – Trout Unlimited Canada

Randy Collins – Alberta Fish & Game Association

Rob Duncan – Public At Large, Southern Region

Lee Foote – Public At Large, Academic Representative

Chris Fowler – Public At Large, Northeast Region

Leonard Hanson – Pheasants Forever, Alberta Council

Brian Joubert – Nature Alberta

Chad Lenz – Alberta Professional Outfitters Society

Adam Norris – Public At Large, Northwest Region

Travis Ripley – Minister's Representative, Alberta Environment and Parks

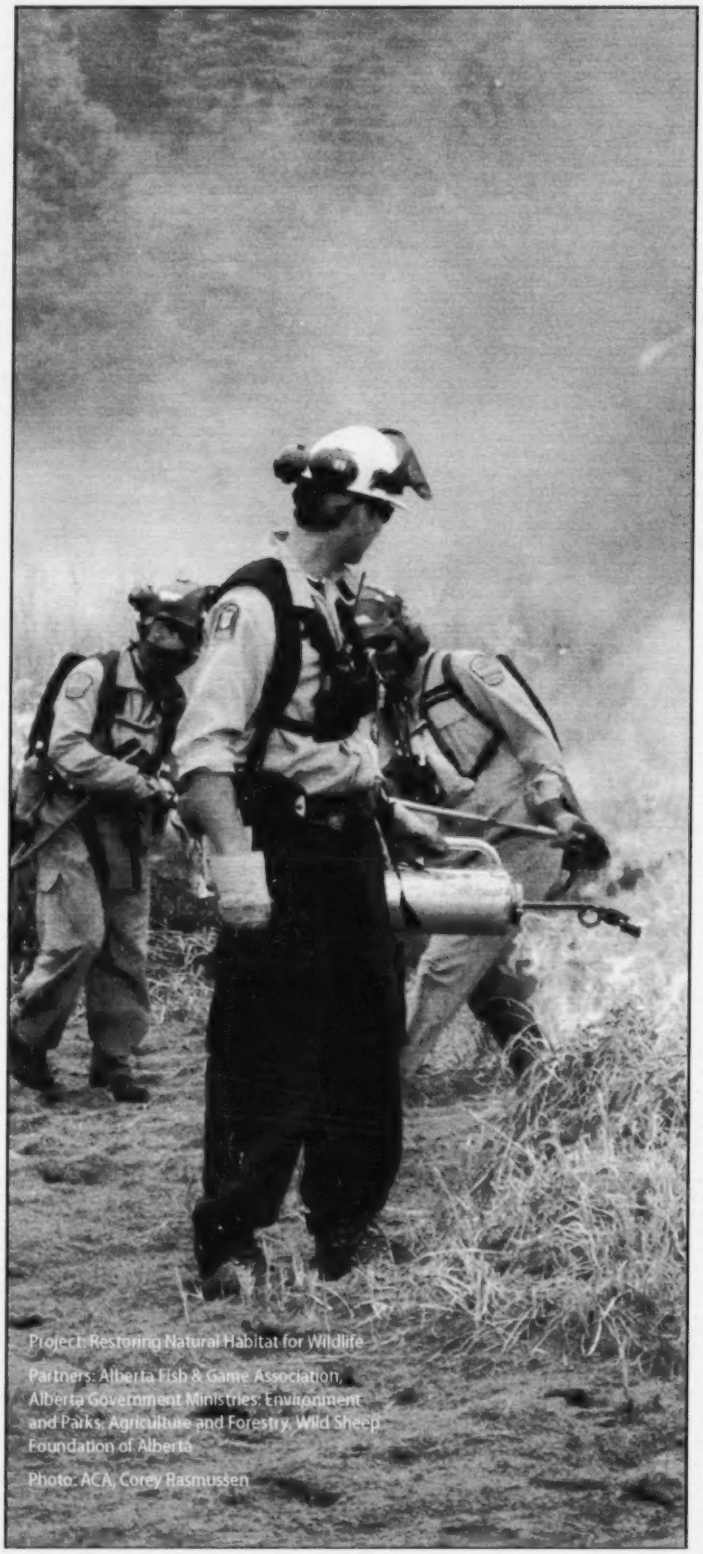
Greg Shyba – Public At Large, Central Region

About ACA

Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for Albertans to enjoy, value and use. Our biologists have worked hard to make sure Alberta's wildlife, fish and plants flourish so that Albertan's have and will have in the future a place to enjoy recreational activities: hunting, fishing, foraging, snowshoeing, birdwatching, skipping rocks… the options are nearly endless.

Delegated Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to being a not-for-profit organization, and a registered charity, ACA holds special status as a Delegated Administrative Organization (DAO), which means that we deliver responsibilities as outlined in the Wildlife Act and defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP). In our role as a DAO, results from our population studies, surveys and assessments feed directly into AEP management plans and can form the basis for fishing and hunting regulation changes and evaluations of new management strategies.

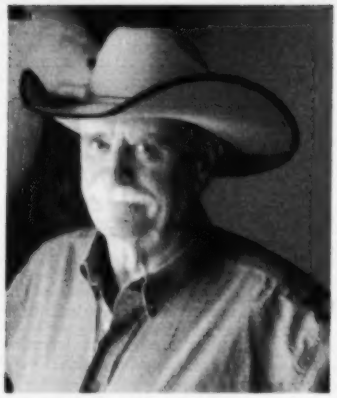


Project: Restoring Natural Habitat for Wildlife

Partners: Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Government Ministries: Environment and Parks; Agriculture and Forestry, Wild Sheep Foundation of Alberta

Photo: ACA, Corey Rasmussen

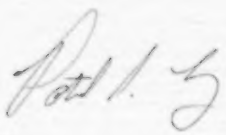
Message from the Chairman



This year I am once again amazed at the volume of work ACA is able to complete in a single year and the impact that work has on conservation issues across Alberta. Of course, it is easy to see when you read the *Annual Report* that we rely heavily on partnerships to accomplish this work. Conservation of our natural heritage is not something that can be achieved by a single organization, but is something that requires all of us pulling together.

ACA staff, volunteers, member groups, Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), corporate partners, landowners and community groups have joined together to complete millions of dollars worth of conservation activities across the province. As you review this *Annual Report* you will notice that the activities span across the province and include everything from peregrine cameras to riparian rehabilitation to fish stocking. All involve some form of partnership. It is clear to me that while the economy may have slowed, Albertan's passion for the outdoors has not waned and their commitment to conservation is as strong as ever.

I want to thank ACA staff, volunteers, member groups, AEP, community groups, municipalities and corporate partners for their support of conservation efforts and I want to assure our stakeholders that ACA will continue to work with our various partners to produce the best conservation results wherever possible. With the combined efforts of ACA and our partners, we can accomplish great things for our fish, wildlife and habitat resources in this province.



Pat Long, Chairman of the Board

Project: Effect of industrial disturbance on wolverine and lynx

Partnerships: Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Trappers' Association, Animal Damage Control – A Division of Bushman Inc., ATB Financial, Bildson Realty Ltd., Bre-Jon Enterprises Ltd., Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Hinton Trappers Association, Richard D. McCabe Professional Corporation, Rocky Mountain Wilderness Society, Stojan's Motor Sports, Trapper Gord Homestead & Survival, University of Alberta, various individual donors: P. Bumstead, L. Elias, L. Hommy, R. Kantor, G. Kruger, G. Macmillan, L. Marciak, D. Middleton, S. Otto, D. Pilon, A. Pollock, R. Reed, B. Smith, J. Sorenson, W. Sullivan, N. Tait, D. Ukeniek, S. Wilson and M. Zapach

photo: Carefully checking what animal is in the live trap.

ACA, Robert Anderson

President and CEO's Message

The economic downturn has made 2015/16 a difficult year for many Albertans. As we expected, ACA saw a reduction in the level of corporate sponsorship we were able to gain over the year; however, many companies still provided some level of support, even if it was reduced from previous years. Thanks to the on going support of hunters and anglers our overall revenue was not negatively impacted. Once again in 2015/16 Alberta had an increase in the number of residents enjoying hunting and angling opportunities across the province.

When I read through this annual report I am proud to say I work for ACA, because I believe we have undertaken a huge array of projects to benefit conservation in this province. I honestly believe that we can show our stakeholders that we have spent their funds wisely and for the benefit of Albertans.

However, I think what I am most proud of is that we have worked very hard at making conservation a partnership. For example, this year, Kids Can Catch events introduced close to 2,500 people to fishing in Alberta and Archery days introduced 390 novices to a new and exciting family activity. Both Kids Can Catch and Archery Days were only successful because of the huge support we have received from corporate partners, member groups and local communities. ACA is well equipped to promote these kinds of events, but without groups such as Alberta Fish & Game Association (AFGA), Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association (AHEIA) and numerous local community groups, Kids Can Catch and Archery Days would not be successful.

Partnerships are also required for our habitat programs and MULTISAR, both of which rely on good working relationships with landowners. Without them our success would be limited. The 4-H Pheasant Raise and Release Program has grown to include 63 young people raising over 5,000 hen pheasants and learning the importance of habitat conservation for upland bird survival. Yet another example of a highly successful program that would not be possible without a strong working partnership with 4-H and the agricultural community.

I think we all know that we can accomplish much more working together than we can apart, and I am proud to say that this year's *Annual Report* is full of examples of what can be accomplished when we work together. The most encouraging thing for me is knowing that all of the partnerships that are highlighted in this year's report are long-term partnerships. As a result, you can expect to see even bigger and better partnership projects as time goes on.

Thank you for taking the time to read the *Annual Report*. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please keep in mind that we are spending funds provided by stakeholders like you, so we rely on feedback from you to ensure we are meeting stakeholder expectations.

Sincerely,

Todd Zimmerling

President and CEO
Alberta Conservation Association

Taber Pheasant Festival

Photo: ACA, Colin Eyo

Our People.

Project: Demonstration Farm Project – Enchant Farm Upland Restoration

Partnerships: Haggins Family, Stamp Farms

Photo: ACA, Layne Seward

Health and Safety

Health and safety is a vital element in today's workplace whether in the office or out in the field. ACA's Health and Safety Program was established, and has been maintained, in order to provide guidelines, policies and procedures for our staff that not only meet OH&S standards but exceed them. The end goal is always that everyone working on ACA projects goes home healthy and safe.

All workers (employees, contractors, volunteers, visitors, etc.) are required to comply with ACA's Health and Safety Program for the protection of themselves and others, resulting in a safer and healthier work environment. The Health and Safety Program is a key part of ensuring we meet the four pillars of ACA project execution: on time, on budget, done safely and to the highest possible standard.

2015/16 Overview

- Ensured all employees remained compliant with incoming WHMIS 2015 legislation.
- Moderate increase in overall incidents compared to previous year and so will work on reducing damage to equipment/property and motor vehicles going forward.
- Continued to conduct work according to requirements established by the Certificate of Recognition (COR) program. Last year ACA completed the 2015 Internal COR Audit and achieved an overall grade of 93 percent; scoring 100 percent in eight of the 13 mandatory elements. The main goal was to ensure all job activities carried out by ACA staff had the required Job Hazard Assessments.
- Continued emphasis on safety training and meetings as well as ensuring Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), both general and specialized, is available to all staff for specific tasks and hazards.
- Established Project Safety Plan (PSP) process for ACA-led events (e.g. Kids Can Catch).
- 2015 ACA Employee Survey results showed that majority of ACA staff supported and understood how ACA's safety program contributed to their safe work environment.

Human Resources

ACA completes many conservation projects over considerable territory each year, thanks in large part to our 78 permanent staff, and numerous seasonal staff. It's not just about hiring talent; it is about keeping people and helping them grow and stay committed over the long term. ACA's most valuable resources is its employees.

One of ACA's proudest accomplishments is knowing that 51 percent of its staff have been with the organization for over ten years and 71 percent of its staff have been with the organization for over five years.

Congratulations and thanks are extended to the following individuals who achieved significant Years of Service milestones this year:

15 Years of Service

Kevin Fitzsimmons, Marco Fontana, John Hallett, Mike Rodtka, Roy Schmelzeisen

10 Years of Service

Mandy Couve De Murville, Amanda Rezansoff, Robb Stavne

5 Years of Service

Layne Seward, Mike Verhage

2015/16 Overview

Employee Survey

- 97.5 percent of employees agree they are satisfied with ACA as a place to work—a tremendous accomplishment.
- 96 percent of employees are satisfied with having a good work-life balance.
- 86 percent are satisfied with ACA's benefit plan.
- 84 percent are satisfied with the whole compensation package available to them.

Employee Retention

- Staff turnover decreased slightly over last year to 6.41 percent. We continue to concentrate on professional development and employee engagement. Employee review documents were redesigned for easier understanding and will be implemented in 2017, giving employees freedom to contribute to their own career path with ACA.

Career Fairs

- Attended three career fairs at the University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge College and University of Alberta. These fairs provided excellent opportunities to introduce ourselves and inform new graduates about career options available at ACA.

Recruitment

- Filled seven permanent and one temporary positions. We also hired 24 seasonal to work for next year's summer field season. This was a successful year for recruitment of staff. Eight of these positions were filled with past and current seasonal staff. ACA has a strong recruitment and retention program that has allowed us to continually hire back staff who have worked with us in the past.

Information Technology

As our organization continues to evolve, the management and ease of access to systems and databases becomes increasingly important. Information Technology (IT) is committed to finding solutions, increasing operational efficiencies, and saving resources in support of this growth.

With changes in the workforce and in digital technology, it is essential for staff to access files from just about anywhere and to work on projects in conjunction with other researchers at almost any location in the province. The IT team is committed to finding solutions by consulting with staff, talking with partners, and meeting with experts in the field to develop a system that ensures staff are working as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Taking advantage of changes in technology (for example, exploring the use of drone equipment), our biologists are increasingly using digital photographs and video to collect data. While these new techniques assist with wildlife and fish management, they create significant issues with respect to storing and analyzing such large databases. IT has been working closely with our field staff to determine potential future data collection activities and to develop a realistic and cost effective plan for storage expansion, which potentially will reach several terabytes in size.

This plan was finalized this year, and implementation began with a complete overhaul of the IT infrastructure and method of provincial access. ACA has independent internet access province-wide and uses remote desktop technology to allow for more efficient access from virtually anywhere staff are working. Improvements continue with system analysis, software and application changes to support our biologists and external customers.

2015/16 Overview

- Continued improving staff access by moving to a blend between remote access and cloud-based structure, allowing staff to work across the province and collaborate with external resources as required.
- Restructured IT area to allow for better skill use and efficient project management. Expanding access to expertise by using targeted consultants will increase the timing and effectiveness of IT solutions company-wide. IT staff are actively involved in planning and delivering the systems they oversee and maintain, which creates an environment of accountability and strong customer support.
- Supported a member group by providing and upgrading an accounting system for Alberta Fish & Game Association.
- Continued updating and improving financial systems to provide better online access for staff in reporting, forecasting, time entry and budgeting. Our goal is to streamline system entry to make an efficient and user-friendly environment for staff, whether they are entering data or retrieving information for monitoring the progress of their projects.
- Provided staff with new drone technology for testing in project delivery.

Kids Can Catch Event, Fort Saskatchewan
Photo: ACA, Colin Eyo

Business Development

We are extremely pleased to partner with the many Alberta corporations (big and small), municipalities and community organizations that sponsor, donate and otherwise support conservation work and values. These partnerships are integral to helping us achieve the annual goals of our Fisheries, Wildlife and Land Management Programs. Over the past few years, we have also seen a dramatic increase in support for our Information, Education and Communications Program, especially for the growing number of events that continue to engage and educate people about conservation in communities across Alberta.

Many of our partnerships are formerly recognized in our Corporate Partners in Conservation (CPIC) program, which provides unique opportunities for businesses, municipalities and organizations to be directly plugged into ACA's conservation work. Our CPIC participants enjoy the ability to promote their affiliation with us through their own communications, and benefit from ACA's promotion of these partnerships through our communications initiatives.

Business Development also generates additional revenue through advertising sales to support our communications activities on television, radio, online and our in-house publications *Conservation Magazine* and the *Alberta Discover Guide*.

2015/16 Overview

- We are pleased to recognize nine companies that are either new Corporate Partners in Conservation or have increased their ongoing support for ACA programs and projects:
  - Cabela's: Kids Can Catch, Archery Days, Waterfowl Warmup, Taber Pheasant Festival, Trout Pond Survey
  - Capital Power: Genesee Power Plant Peregrine Camera
  - Martin Motorsports: Report A Poacher Education Trailer
  - Superior Propane: Narrow Lake Conservation Camp
  - TeraGo Networks: Weber Centre Peregrine Camera
  - TransAlta: Peregrine Cameras Project, Wabamun Lake Kids Can Catch
  - West Fraser (Sundre Forest Products): Fishery Inventories
  - Williams Energy Canada: Report A Poacher Education Trailer
  - Wingate by Wyndham: WIN Card Benefits Program

Kids Can Catch Event, Lake Wabamun
Photo: ACA

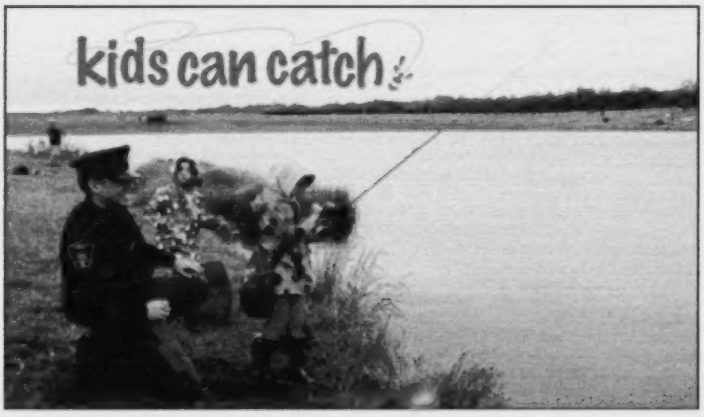
Our Conservation Programs

Information, Education and Communications

The Information, Education and Communications Program endeavors to educate Albertans on wildlife, fish and land conservation issues, and inform stakeholders of conservation activities and emerging issues. We reach our audience through events, social media, our website and our publications. Our ultimate goal is to build positive relationships through conservation while strengthening not only ACA's brand but that of our partners and member groups as well.

2015/16 Overview

- Printed 40,000 copies of *Alberta Discover Guide* in spring of 2015 and 80,000 copies in January 2016, featuring 761 conservation sites (including DUC and AFGA sites). The guide can also be found online and on the *Alberta Outdoor Adventure Guide* app.
- Provided core business documents, including the *Annual Operating Plan* and *Annual Report* to our Board of Directors on time for their approval.
- Printed a combined total of 30,000 copies of *Conservation Magazine* for 2015 and added to the page count of previous issues. The magazine is published twice a year and is distributed free of charge to subscribers and at tradeshows and other events. The Fall/Winter 2015 issue was a finalist in the Alberta Magazine Awards.
- Supported the Fish, Wildlife and Land Management Resource Programs and Business Development with visual communications and on-demand media services such as warning signs and advertising during fisheries aeration across the province. In 2015/16, we coordinated the production, writing and design of corporate reports, developed key communications materials to ensure appropriate branding and messaging, sign design, production and printing, as well as the design and placement of advertising messages and materials.
- ACA, along with 57 different sponsors at 15 different Kids Can Catch events, provided 2,456 people the opportunity to learn to fish.
- The peregrine cameras remain hugely popular, and views of the pages on our website accounted for half of the web traffic to www.ab-conservation.com in 2015/16.
- ACA has 8,355 Facebook followers, 3,537 Twitter followers, 310 YouTube subscribers and Constant Contact is sent to 78,548 subscribers.
- Taber Pheasant Festival 2015 was extremely successful, drawing in 800 hunters from five provinces and three states. Some of the events included along with the novice and regular hunt were a Scotch tasting event, a culinary event and a banquet and silent auction. The festival won an Alto Award for Outstanding Sustainable Tourism from Travel Alberta.
- Thirteen teams from across Alberta travelled to participate in Waterfowl Warmup in August 2015. The event successfully raised money for the new Report A Poacher trailer and we will continue to make this an annual event.



Project: Peregrine Cameras

Partnerships: Aspen Properties, Capital Power, GreenVOLT, TeraGo, TransAlta, University of Alberta, WiBand

Photo: ACA, Colin Eyo

Alberta Discover Guide

The *Alberta Discover Guide* is a free annual publication which features conservation sites across Alberta that outdoor enthusiasts can access for hunting, fishing, hiking, foraging and photography. The 2016 edition features 761 conservation sites, incuding DUC and AFGA sites. Available in both print and digital formats, the guide provides individual site details and directions to conservation sites, including stocked and aerated lakes and ponds. We print 80,000 copies at the beginning of each year to mail out to subscribers and to distribute at trade shows and to hunting and fishing licence retailers across Alberta.

Partnerships

Alberta Fish & Game Association and affiliated clubs, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Advertisers

Alberta Outdoor Adventure Guide App

The *Alberta Outdoor Adventure Guide* app is free of charge and provides information on conservation sites contained in the print and web versions of the *Alberta Discover Guide* in a mobile format. In-app notifications help us communicate relevant information about the recreational opportunities ACA creates, such as stocked and aerated fishing ponds, pheasant release sites, kid-friendly events and more. It also provides us with a platform for advertising content from ACA's stakeholders and other organizations and businesses focused on fishing, hunting and conservation. In 2016/17, we will be relaunching the app to be more user-friendly across all platforms.

Partnerships

N/A

Annual Operating Plan

The *Annual Operating Plan* informs Albertans and our stakeholders and partners about the projects we are undertaking during the fiscal year and how we are directing revenue to our resource program areas. The plan is produced each year in both print and electronic formats. The accuracy of the content is our primary concern prior to its release. Our Information, Education and Communications Program coordinates content from the other resource programs and then edits the content and designs the document. After review and approval by our Board of Directors, the plan is posted on our website at the start of each fiscal year. In 2015/16, the plan was provided to the Board in a timely fashion for approval, and it was posted on our website at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Partnerships

N/A

Annual Report

The *Annual Report* is a valuable tool for ACA and our stakeholders because it provides information about our work and the funding we receive each year from levies, partnerships and donations; it also provides audited financial statements. It is one of our business reports that demonstrates that ACA is accountable and transparent. Our Information, Education and Communications Program team coordinates content for the report from the other resource programs and edits the content and designs and produces the document. After the report has been reviewed and approved by our Board of Directors, it is printed and posted on our website. Through this process, our communications team also edits all resource program annual summaries and posts them online each April following ACA's fiscal year-end.

Partnerships

N/A

Archery Days

ACA supports the efforts of local organizers to plan and host archery events that provide youth and first-time archers with an opportunity to learn the basics of archery in a fun an accessible way. The goal of each event is to foster an interest in archery as a gateway to hunting. Each event is led by a local organization. In 2015/16, Archery Days events were held in Lamont, Magrath, Galahad (Battle River) and Edmonton. In total, 390 children, youth and adults tried archery during the four events. We will continue to work with local organizers interested in offering Archery Days in their communities.

Partnerships

Alberta Bowhunters Association, Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Aux Sable, Cabela's Edmonton North, Cabela's Edmonton South, Galahad Archery Club, Lamont Fish & Game Club, Magrath Rod and Gun Club, University of Alberta

Conservation Magazine

Conservation Magazine is a free bi-annual publication produced by ACA that highlights the projects and work we and our member groups are doing in Alberta, discusses topical conservation issues, and bridges an understanding between the hunting and angling communities and the larger conservation community. The magazine also helps increase ACA's profile in Alberta and is used as a tool by our program areas (Fisheries, Wildlife, Land Management, Business Development) to reach out to potential donors and partners. The articles in our 2015 editions highlighted landowners we have worked with; conservation sites; our granting programs; ACA events; the spring goose hunt; behind-the-scenes looks of work by our biologists; recipes using fish and game; and some of the creatures that call Alberta home, such as kangaroo rats, snowy owls and wolves. The magazine is delivered to subscribers and distributed at trade shows and events, and it is also available in digital format.

Partnerships

Advertisers

Conservation Site Signs

Each of our conservation sites has branded signage to recognize our partners, provide wayfinding for users and inform users of any restrictions on the site. We work with our Land Management, Fisheries and Wildlife teams to produce signs for these conservation sites, including fisheries access sites, and their boundaries, as well as for pheasant release sites, thin-ice areas (warnings) and interpretive trails.

Partnerships
N/A

Emerging Issues

Additional requests for communications support by the executive of ACA or the other resource programs (Fisheries, Wildlife and Land Management) occur throughout the year. These requests include editing presentations, relaying up-to-date information on aeration and changes in pheasant release sites, responding through social media to news events, or documenting damage to conservation sites using drone footage. Our Information, Education and Communications Program team provides on-demand services in design, copywriting, editing, print production and digital media.

Partnerships
N/A

Final Report Series

Each year, Fisheries, Wildlife and Land Management Resource Programs are responsible for submitting reports on the projects they have been working on to describe the findings of the work. Our Information, Education and Communications Program team is responsible for editing, proofing and formatting these reports and making sure they are available to the public and our stakeholders and partners through our website and the Alberta Government Library.

Partnerships
N/A

General Advertising

Advertising helps us work toward a number of long-term goals within the *Strategic Business Plan*, such as increasing public recognition of the ACA brand; creating positive profiles of hunting, fishing and trapping; and developing corporate partnerships. In addition to these primary goals, ongoing ACA program support (such as for the Enhanced Fish Stocking project, Report A Poacher Program and event promotions) provides recognition of the work we do, leading to increased ACA brand recognition by the public and corporate support. We create consistent and contemporary visual communications using print, web and social media platforms.

Partnerships
N/A

Grant Fund Annual Report

The Grant Fund Annual Report provides stakeholders with information about our granting process, the funding allocations and the activities and results of the projects that receive funding each fiscal year. ACA annually funnels over $1 million into conservation work in Alberta through grants. Since starting our grant programs in 2002/03, we have awarded over $14.1 million. Since 2014/15, ACA has administrated two grant programs: ACA Research Grants and ACA Conservation, Community and Education Grants. Projects that have benefited from long-term funding cover everything from avian monitoring and education programs to research on bighorn sheep and elk. Other recipients include the Edmonton Nature Club's popular Snow Goose Chase, the Camrose Purple Martin Festival, and various projects by the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, which engages adults and youth in outdoor activities such as fishing and bowhunting. The Conservation, Community and Education grants also fund education programs, such as the Emerald Award–winning Yellow Fish Road program by Trout Unlimited Canada and Nature Alberta's *Living by Water* program. These projects are only a small sample of the 889 projects funded to date by ACA. We update the grants section on our website as needed and promote grants and deadlines in the fall and winter.

Partnerships
N/A

Internal Communications Needs

Effective communication is an integral part of our operations and fundamental to ensuring our stakeholders and the public are informed about and engaged with our programming. This work includes proactively informing individuals and organizations about upcoming opportunities, such as events or volunteer opportunities, and sharing results and information about completed projects or initiatives. The Internal Communications Needs project provides creative and technical services to the President & CEO, our Human Resources and Business Development teams, and our Wildlife, Fisheries and Land Management Resource Programs. We work with program managers, regional managers and project leads to ensure that our programs and projects receive the communications materials and support needed to contribute to their success and recognition. This work is accomplished by our communications staff and using out-sourced services.

Partnerships
N/A

Kids Can Catch Program

Kids Can Catch is a province-wide program in which ACA teams up with community and corporate partners to create free family fishing events. Sponsored by Dow Chemical Canada, Kids Can Catch aims to "hook" new and young anglers on fishing, fish conservation and responsible angling. In 2015/16, nearly 2,500 adults and children came out to fish at 14 Kids Can Catch events across Alberta, involving nearly 60 community and corporate partners. The success of this year's events shows that the Kids Can Catch Program is a successful model in which ACA can (1) engage local organizations and businesses interested in fishing and conservation, and (2) invite families, youth and new Canadians to give fishing a try and learn about fishing, conservation and responsible angling. The program continues to generate interest from community and corporate partners, and we anticipate Kids Can Catch will continue to grow in 2016/17.

Partnerships

Program sponsor:
Dow Chemical Canada

Event partners: 8th Avenue Eyecare (Brooks), Absolute Safety (Brooks), Access Pipeline, Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Branch, Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Alberta Lifesaving Society, ATB Financial (Stony Plain), Aux Sable, Berkley, Brooks and County of Newell Early Childhood Development Coalition, Brooks Canadian Tire, Brooks Fire Department, Brooks Fish & Game Association, Brooks Walmart, Cabela's Edmonton North, Cabela's Edmonton South, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Coronation Family Foods, Coronation Silver Club, County of Newell, County of Paintearth, Dow Chemical Canada, Edmonton Old Timers' Fishing Club, Edmonton Trout Fishing Club, Fairview Recreation Society, Fort Saskatchewan Fish & Game Association, Fort Saskatchewan Lions Club, Fort Saskatchewan Naturalist Society, Gibbons Elks, Golby Hardware and Sports, Grande Prairie Regional College, Grimshaw Agricultural Society, Handi-Can Septic, Harold Walters and Associates, Lamont Fish & Game Association, Magrath Rod and Gun Club, Northern Lights Fly Tyers, Parkland County, Pita Pit (Brooks), River Valley Alliance, Shakespeare, Southern Alberta Outdoorsmen, Stony Plain Fish & Game Association, Superfly, Thompson-Pallister Bait Company, Town of Beaumont, Town of Coronation, Town of Fairview, Town of Gibbons, Town of Stettler, TransAlta, Vibrook Vacuum and Septic, Village of Wabamun, Wabamun and District Chamber of Commerce, Wabamun Citizens on Patrol, Walleye Master

Marketing Campaign

We are looking to take a longer-term approach to increasing ACA's brand recognition through advertising contemporary lifestyles that include hunting, angling, trapping and conservation. This multi-year approach will provide a consistent advertising campaign using a wider scope of digital and print media, including outdoor billboards.

Partnerships

N/A

Peregrine Cameras

The peregrine cameras provide a bird's-eye view into the daily lives of peregrines as they fight for mates and territory, catch food and raise their young. We set up cameras at four locations in Edmonton—Bell Tower, University of Alberta, Genesee Power Plant and Weber Centre—and we live-stream the video on our website. In the past year, we upgraded all cameras to high definition night vision for 24-hour viewing. We also added an additional camera at Weber Centre and upgraded remote access to computers, which allows us to respond faster when any of the nest sites experience streaming issues. Our intent is to make the viewer's experience even better. The cameras are hugely popular, and views of the pages on our website accounted for half of all our web traffic in 2015/16. These visits are important because they provide a connection between people and the natural world, and they also introduce visitors to ACA and our stakeholders.

Partnerships

Aspen Properties, Capital Power, GreenVOLT, TeraGo, TransAlta, University of Alberta, WiBand

Social Media

One of ACA's key goals in our 10-year *Strategic Business Plan* is to raise awareness about our organization and the work we do. Social media is a way for us to connect with, inform and grow our audience. By having a medium where we can share our work and interests with people on a daily basis, we can generate interest and conversations that would otherwise not exist. In 2015/16, we connected with the public through our four primary social media mediums: Facebook, Twitter, our e-newsletter, and YouTube. Ultimately, the goal of our social media efforts is fostering an interested and compassionate audience so that we are connected with a larger scope of people when the time comes to deliver an important message or make a request regarding conservation in Alberta. The gradual change in our social media approach over the past year has helped support our efforts and reach more people.

Partnerships

N/A

Stakeholder Communications

Our Information, Education and Communications Program assists member groups and stakeholders with creative support in digital, print and social media, both in event planning and on-demand services. We promote projects and events for our stakeholders and member groups whenever possible; examples include publishing advertisements

in *Conservation Magazine*, writing posts on Facebook or designing signs for conservation sites.

Partnerships
N/A

Waterfowl Warmup

ACA hosted Waterfowl Warmup on August 20, 2015, at Beaverhill Sporting Clays, 45 minutes east of Edmonton, to raise funds for a new educational trailer for the Report A Poacher Program. Sporting clays is like golf with a shotgun—rather than holes there are shooting stations with trap machines that launch clay targets. The four-person team that shoots the most clay targets wins. But the real winner is fish and wildlife in Alberta because the event raised funds to purchase the new educational trailer and increased awareness about the value of the Report A Poacher Program.

Partnerships
Beaverhill Sporting Clays, Cabela's, Canadian Red Agencies, Evan's Group

Website Maintenance and Development

ACA's website provides an accessible gateway to information about our work using current technology to engage users. It is perhaps the primary platform we use to work toward increasing ACA's profile in Alberta, one of the long-term goals of our 10-year *Strategic Business Plan*. Highlights for 2015/16 include redesigning the website in its entirety and creating a new random draw format for the Taber Pheasant Festival. Overall, the website works well as a gateway to information about ACA, and we are constantly evaluating and discussing updates, both minor and more extensive, and making sure the website presents information in the most user-friendly way.

Partnerships
N/A

WIN Card Reimbursements

Working in partnership with Hunting for Tomorrow and the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, the WIN Card Reimbursement Program supports the recruitment of young people into hunting. This program gives ACA and its member groups a way to connect with new hunters when they purchase their first WIN card. Although the cost of reimbursing each youth for their first WIN card is relatively small, the impact of this program has been significant. ACA has been able to enhance young hunters' experience by introducing and connecting them to programs, information and member-group organizations. It is our hope that making these connections at a young age will result in long-term relationships being formed between these young stakeholders and the larger conservation community. In 2015/16, Hunting for Tomorrow distributed over 1,500 information packages to youth who had completed the hunter education course. A total of 345 youth returned the reimbursement form and asked to be included on ACA's mailing list to receive ongoing information from ACA regarding hunting, fishing, trapping and other conservation activities.

Partnerships
Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Hunting for Tomorrow

Wildlife Program

Relationships are the key ingredient to meaningful conservation. Science-based evidence is important for guiding the way forward but finding that common ground among stakeholders is the spark that ignites action. It's everyday people that make conservation work, so finding common ground is a vital step in everything we do.

ACA's Wildlife Program works with many stakeholders in a variety of different projects: from working with Alberta trappers for the wolverine project to working with 4-H kids to raise and release pheasant hens and working with landowners to improve shoreline breeding habitat for piping plovers. Our projects would suffer without the help of our partners and stakeholders.

Project: Alberta Volunteer Amphibian Monitoring Program

Partnerships: Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Society of Professional Biologists, Edmonton Valley Zoo, Parks Canada

photo: ACA, Kris Kendell

2015/16 Overview

- Wolverines visited 18 of the 62 sites that trappers and staff monitored in the winter of 2014/15. Camera images identified 19 individual wolverines and hair samples were collected from 80 (though many may be repeat individuals). We determined that there may be different wolverine genetic types.
- Lynx and fisher were more common than wolverine and visited 29 of the 62 sites. We collected hair samples from 15 martens, 143 fishers, 131 lynx, seven coyotes, five squirrels and four weasels during winter 2014/15 (though many may be repeat individuals).
- Over the winter of 2015/16, 22 trappers from the Boreal region operated 51 run poles to passively collect photos and hair samples. ACA biologists operated another 11 run poles.
- Taber Pheasant Festival celebrated its fifth year. It is the biggest hunting festival in Canada and won with the 2015 Alto award for "Outstanding Sustainable Tourism" from Travel Alberta.
- Hunting opportunities at the Festival were increased by 33 percent in 2015. Roughly 800 hunters, including 85 novice hunters from five Canadian provinces and three US states came to the MD of Taber to participate in the one week pheasant festival in Oct 2015.
- Met with 25 landowners to gain support for the grizzly bear inventory project and surveyed 22 private properties targeting the largest landowners with the highest-quality grizzly bear habitat first. We also surveyed 20 grazing allotments in the Porcupine Hills.
- Developed 60 routes to revisit 930 rub objects four times over the upcoming 2016 survey season. That's 3,720 visits over a three-month sampling period, or roughly 6,000 km of backcountry travel!
- Two new public pheasant release sites were added this year; South Plain Lake located east of Edmonton, and Hopewell located east of Calgary.
- Initiated two new approaches to gain hunter feedback at pheasant release sites. Hunters were encouraged to fill out cards at survey boxes available at the field sites, and participate in an online survey on our website. Feedback from hunters will help us adapt the program over coming years to improve overall hunter satisfaction.
- Sixty-three kids participated in the second year of the 4-H Raise and Release program and raised 5,350 pheasants from day-old chicks into 14-week-old hens. The hens were released into suitable habitat chosen by the kids and our biologists.
- Held a workshop for the 4-H kids to discuss pheasant husbandry and habitat needs as well as visited many of the respective farms to discuss pen design and bird health.
- Collected data from the first two years of biodiversity and gamebird monitoring at the Enchant Farm demonstration project to provide a background to evaluate approaches for re-establishing vibrant upland bird densities while maintaining a profitable farming operation.
- Detected 58 bird and two amphibian species during baseline monitoring on the farm over the past two years.
- Collaborated with partners to initiate The Milk River Ridge Reservoir Water Quality Stewardship Initiative project. Together we installed 25 km of fence line to separate riparian habitat from encroaching agricultural activity and open this zone for hunting.
- Late summer gamebird reproductive surveys indicated a better than average year for both pheasants and grey partridge for fall 2015. We had roughly 4.6 flushes of either partridge or pheasant per hour or a flush every 13 minutes!
- Formed a partnership with the Peace Country Beef & Forage Association to work with them on sharp-tailed grouse habitat stewardship in relation to beef production.
- Collaborated with ranchers and completed Habitat Conservation Strategies and reassessments on roughly 18,000 acres as part of the MULTISAR project.
- Partnered with seven producers within the MULTISAR program to implement ten enhancements ranging from pasture pipelines (water) to replaced barbed wire with smooth wire to facilitate trouble free pronghorn movement.
- Enhanced over 58 km of piping plover habitat since 2002, with the majority considered "critical" breeding habitat.
- Published one status report in 2015/16 (chestnut-collared longspur) and a second report (Arctic grayling update) is ready for review by Alberta's Endangered Species Conservation Committee. Two reports (bison update, western wood-pewee) are in draft stage.

ACA/4-H Pheasant Raise and Release Program

Pheasants were first introduced into Alberta in 1908 by a group of recreational enthusiasts to provide enhanced upland hunting opportunities. Now more than 100 years later, the tradition continues as we partner with many other stakeholders to improve upland hunting opportunities in Alberta. Changes in agricultural practices and the conversion of native prairie into cropland have dramatically modified the landscape to the point where native gamebirds are nearly eliminated from areas dedicated to cropland. Pheasants can adapt to areas predominately used for cropland provided that a suite of habitat features are also available. In 2014, we initiated a new partnership with 4-H Alberta to offer kids an opportunity to raise pheasants from day-old chicks into near adult hens. In 2015/16, 63 kids from 4-H raised 5,350 hen pheasants and released them into suitable upland habitat; this was an increase from 20 participants and 1,525 pheasants raised the previous year. We held a workshop for the kids to provide guidance on pheasant husbandry and discuss habitat features that are vital for pheasants to survive in the wild. Helping kids understand and recognize the habitat needs of pheasants is a fundamental objective of this project. We also visited many of the kids at their farms to discuss pen design and condition of their pheasants. This year was a huge success with more than three times the number of participants than the previous year.

Partnerships

4-H Alberta, Committed Ag Supply, Lethbridge Fish & Game Association, Pheasants Forever – Lethbridge Chapter, Red Deer Fish & Game Association

Alberta Volunteer Amphibian Monitoring Program

Volunteers have been playing a crucial role in wildlife conservation efforts for many years. Vast datasets collected through programs like the nearly 50-year-old North American Breeding Bird Survey, or more recent programs such as eBird, would not exist without their efforts. Individuals who volunteer with ACA can develop skills and gain knowledge related to conservation and, at the same time, increase our capacity to deliver conservation initiatives. In 2015/16, 36 participants from the Alberta Volunteer Amphibian Monitoring Program submitted 80 amphibian and ten reptile observations, including the location of one snake hibernaculum (den). These data represented 80 percent of the amphibian and 40 percent of the reptile species native to the province. Data collected by volunteers provide a better understanding of the distribution and status of Alberta's amphibians and reptiles, and provide valuable information for land-use planning efforts. These partnerships and volunteer relationships are examples of how ACA can work with a network of enthusiastic volunteers to positively impact conservation.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Society of Professional Biologists, Edmonton Valley Zoo, Parks Canada

Alberta Wildlife Status Reports

ACA and Alberta Environment and Parks produce Alberta Wildlife Status Reports for wild species that are believed to be declining in Alberta. These reports are the essential first step for a species to have its status assessed, and they play a key role in identifying *Endangered* and *Threatened* species that need legal protection and recovery actions to keep them from becoming extinct in Alberta. Each status report summarizes the information needed for assessing a species' status—where it lives; the specific habitat it requires; its population size and whether it is stable, increasing, or declining; factors preventing the species from thriving in Alberta; and what work has been done or is ongoing to manage the species in Alberta. A committee of Alberta-based scientists compares the information in each status report to internationally set thresholds (for population size, for example) and recommends a status for the species. Using international criteria and thresholds ensures the status assessment process is as unbiased as possible. The status recommended by the scientists is subsequently scrutinized by an Alberta-based multi stakeholder committee (the Endangered Species Conservation Committee). Composed of land managers, academic institutions, conservation groups and industry, the committee provides its recommendation on a species' status to the Minister of Alberta Environment and Parks. The ultimate decision on status designation (e.g., *Endangered*, *Threatened*) is made by the Minister. In 2015/16, we published one status report (chestnut-collared longspur), prepared another report (Arctic grayling update) for review by Alberta's Endangered Species Conservation Committee, and edited drafts of two upcoming reports (bison update 2015, western wood-pewee). ACA plays a key role in assessing the status of Alberta's species at risk through our involvement with the Alberta Wildlife Status Report series.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks

Amphibian Monitoring Using Environmental DNA

We are partnering with the University of Alberta to develop a new approach for surveying amphibians using environmental DNA (eDNA). Environmental DNA refers to the DNA that organisms leave behind or shed as they pass through the environment. Most people are aware that this is possible with tissue such as hair, but the next step is collecting a DNA signature from material such as mucus, feces, urine or sloughed skin that is naturally contained within pond water and sediment. To complement this research, we collected water and sediment samples from three ponds at the Shell Carmon Creek project near Peace River, Alberta. The samples are being analyzed by a geneticist at the University of Alberta to try to detect the presence of wood frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*), boreal chorus frog (*Pseudacris maculata*) and western (boreal) toad (*Anaxyrus boreas*) eDNA. These results will be compared against observational data for each species at each pond. The Shell Carmon Creek work will contribute to the evaluation and interpretation of a graduate student's thesis work and will allow us to better understand the limitations of the eDNA method for short- and long-term monitoring purposes of amphibians in an industrial setting. Although there are some details to be resolved, our initial findings support the theory that amphibian DNA in the environment can be used as a proxy for directly observing a target species once robust sample collection and assay protocols are established.

Partnerships

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada – Industrial Postgraduate Scholarships Program, Shell Canada Energy, University of Alberta – Brandon Booker (M.Sc. candidate), David Coltman, Corey Davis and Cynthia Paszkowski

Demonstration Farm Project – Enchant Farm Upland Restoration

Farming has become far more intensified since the post-war recovery following World War II. Wildlife that once thrived with earlier farming practices have increasingly struggled, and with more than 24 million acres now under cultivation, hunting opportunity for upland gamebirds has diminished substantively. We have established a partnership with a working farm to evaluate approaches for re-establishing vibrant upland bird densities while maintaining a profitable farming operation. Working closely with the landowner, we will trial habitat enhancements and progressive game management practices to increase the breeding density and reproductive output of existing gamebirds (grey partridge) as well as re-establish a pheasant population. We will also monitor a range of non-target species to assess the impact on amphibians,

Project: Amphibian Monitoring Using Environmental DNA

Partnerships: Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada – Industrial Postgraduate Scholarships Program, Shell Canada Energy, University of Alberta – Brandon Booker (M.Sc. candidate), David Coltman, Corey Davis and Cynthia Paszkowski

Photo: ACA, Amanda Rezansoff

invertebrates and songbirds. We will focus enhancements on habitat features important to upland birds for nesting, brood rearing and winter survival. The initial two years (2014 and 2015) of the project focused on collecting baseline data that will allow for evaluating changes over the next 12 years. The 1,340 ac (5.42 km²) property has 893 ac under cultivation and already has shrub enhancements around some of the field edges surrounding the six fields under irrigation. We counted 55 grey partridge pairs in early spring 2014 (10.1 pairs/km²) and 118 pairs in 2015 (21 pairs/km²). Nesting season conditions in 2014 were favourable, and the winter leading up to the 2015 spring count was devoid of snow pack for most of the winter. We plan to trial habitat treatments along the edge and within crop to increase gamebird densities while minimizing impacts on farm operations.

Partnerships

Haggins family, Stamp Farms

Effect of Industrial Disturbance on Wolverine

We are working in partnership with the Alberta Trappers' Association to identify where wolverines occur in the province and to determine the major factors associated with their distribution. To complement our remote-camera data collection, we initiated a partnership with the University of Alberta to study wolverine ecology at a finer scale. PhD student Matthew Scrafford is researching the effects of industrial activity on wolverine ecology in the boreal forest of northern Alberta. As part of our commitment to the project, ACA staff has been assisting with radio collaring wolverines and investigating their movements, feeding patterns and den site selection. Forty-two wolverines have been captured over the past three winters near Rainbow Lake and Birch Mountains. These animals are helping us to better understand the patterns of association between wolverines and the human footprint in the boreal forest.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Trappers' Association, Animal Damage Control – A Division of Bushman Inc., ATB Financial, Bildson Realty Ltd., Bre-Jon Enterprises Ltd., Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Hinton Trappers Association, Richard D. McCabe Professional Corporation, Rocky Mountain Wilderness Society, Stojan's Motor Sports, Trapper Gord Homestead & Survival, University of Alberta, various individual donors: P. Bumstead, L. Elias, L. Hommy, R. Kantor, G. Kruger, G. Macmillan, L. Marciak, D. Middleton, S. Otto, D. Pilon, A. Pollock, R. Reed, B. Smith, J. Sorenson, W. Sullivan, N. Tait, D. Ukeniek, S. Wilson and M. Zapach

Grizzly Bear Inventory in Bear Management Area 5

In the spring of 2015, we met with more than 25 landowners in southwest Alberta to gain support for the grizzly bear inventory project and request access onto their private lands to survey for bear rub objects. We began this initiative by first identifying some of the largest landholders with the highest-quality grizzly bear habitat in the southern portion of BMA 5, an area between Crowsnest Pass and Kananaskis. With the assistance and support of this local ranching community, we identified 418 rub objects on deeded and leased land, an effort that also included surveying 20 grazing allotments in the Porcupine Hills. We attached short strands of barbed wire to each rub object to assist with hair collection planned for the summer of 2016. Combined with efforts from 2014, we have identified 830 rub objects to date. In the summer of 2016, we will return four times to each of these stations to collect hair for DNA analysis. These DNA results will be used in combination with data collected by Alberta Environment and Parks in the northern portion of the zone to perform a mark-recapture population density estimate for BMA 5. Ongoing concern exists over the frequent conflict between humans and bears in southwestern Alberta. An accurate population estimate is critical for understanding human–bear conflicts and making proactive land use decisions to reduce these conflicts.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Innovates – Technology Futures, landowners in southwest Alberta, Parks Canada, Riversdale Resources Ltd./Benga Mining Ltd., Safari Club International – Northern Alberta Chapter, Spray Lake Sawmills, Waterton Biosphere Reserve Association

Photo: ACA, Mike Verage

Habitat Legacy Partnership

A mix of habitat features that provide conditions suitable for nesting, brood rearing and winter protection, as well as travel, is crucial to the success of upland birds. ACA initiated the Habitat Legacy Partnership to work collaboratively with conservation groups, private landowners, irrigation districts and municipal districts to facilitate enhancements that target these habitat features. In 2015/16, we planted 3,800 shrubs on land open to hunting to create escape cover and winter habitat for upland gamebirds and other wildlife. We also maintained and monitored more than 17 km of shrub rows planted over the past four years. These shelterbelts provide numerous benefits for a variety of species and are often a first step to engage landowners in habitat enhancement activities. To improve habitat connectivity, water quality and hunting access, we collaborated with partners to initiate the Milk River Ridge Reservoir Water Quality Stewardship Initiative project. Through this initiative, we created a boundary around 25 km of the reservoir and main canal to separate riparian habitat from encroaching agriculture. This new fence line also distinguishes this zone from private property, vastly increasing the area now open to public hunting. We also prepared the soil and seeded 130 ac in this area to permanent habitat targeted for upland birds. Most of this southern landscape is in private hands. We continue to develop strong working partnerships within the agriculture community and recognize that farmers and ranchers play a key role in the future sustainability of upland gamebirds in this system. Engaging with and listening to our stakeholders is a fundamental guiding principle that strengthens the grassroots nature of this work. We look forward to continuing to work with landowners to improve habitat through a network of key drainages to sustain gamebirds on this landscape.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Landowners, Lethbridge Fish & Game Association, Magrath Rod and Gun Club, Municipal District of Warner, Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Lethbridge Chapters, Southern Alberta Walleye Trail

MULTISAR

Southeastern Alberta is home to the highest density of *At Risk* wildlife in Alberta. MULTISAR is a multi-species stewardship program for species at risk that focuses on the Milk River and portions of the South Saskatchewan watershed. The program is a collaborative effort among ranchers, ACA, Alberta Environment and Parks and Prairie Conservation Forum. In 2015/16, we completed wildlife and range surveys on approximately 18,000 ac of land and completed six habitat plans for landowners to help them incorporate wildlife habitat needs into their ranching practices. *Endangered* little brown bats and *Threatened* ferruginous hawks, chestnut-collared longspurs and Sprague's pipits are just a few of the species identified on these lands. We also implemented enhancements on 11 ranches. We continued restoration of 1,300 ac back to native grass by planting 2,000 needle-and-thread grass plugs and spraying noxious weeds such as Canada thistle. We also seeded two fields back to wheat for a second time to control weeds and prepared the soil on 90 ac for seeding in the spring of 2016. Further, we worked with a rancher to install two solar fencers along the Milk River to move cattle away from a sensitive riparian area. We also helped install a water pipeline to distribute water away from sensitive areas and improve cattle distribution and forage patterns. Producers have also installed roughly 15 km of wildlife friendly fencing (smooth bottom wire at least 18 inches high) to facilitate the movement of pronghorn across their land. Through open communication, we continue to build long-term relationships with landholders and increase their awareness of species at risk. These relationships have helped us implement stewardship activities that benefit wildlife habitat and complement the business strategy for each ranch on approximately 330,000 ac of land.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Canadian Natural Resources Limited, Government of Canada, Landholders, Prairie Conservation Forum

Pheasant Release Program

Upland gamebird hunting has a long-standing tradition in Alberta. Since the introduction of the Chinese ring-necked pheasant in the early 1900s, wild populations have become established in select areas of southern Alberta. To accommodate the high demand for hunting opportunities, the Alberta government started a hatchery in 1945 and created the Provincial Pheasant Release Program, which released thousands of hatchery-raised pheasants onto the landscape each fall. In more recent years, the hatchery was privatized due to government cutbacks; the release program was on the brink of being lost in 2012. Fortunately, a small group of keen hunters formed Upland Birds of Alberta and agreed to run the program for 2012 and 2013. ACA took over the program in 2014 with the overall aim to provide greater hunting opportunities for all Albertans. We released 17,080 male pheasants for put-and-take hunting in 2014 and increased this number to 25,000 in 2015. We developed a web page that provides a map and directions to release sites to increase accessibility of this hunting opportunity. We operated 43 release sites in 2015, including one new site close to Edmonton and another new site half an hour from Calgary. We worked with five Fish & Game clubs, which played a key role in the program by conducting weekly releases of pheasants (6,040

total) at 27 sites from Medicine Hat to Cardston. We contracted MacFarlane Pheasants to release pheasants three times per week at the remaining 16 sites (18,960 total). MacFarlane Pheasants housed these birds in a holding facility near Strathmore. Birds were released at northern sites for nine weeks beginning in mid-September and at southern sites for six weeks beginning just prior to the opening day of hunting on October 15. The program has been well received with positive feedback from hundreds of hunters.

Partnerships

Cardston Fish & Game Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Fort Macleod Fish & Game Association, Lethbridge Fish & Game Association, MacFarlane Pheasants, Medicine Hat Fish & Game Association, Picture Butte Fish & Game Association

Piping Plover Recovery Program

Piping plovers are small, stubby-billed *Endangered* shorebirds that nest and feed along gravel beaches. They face a number of threats, including high rates of predation and damage to their nesting and feeding habitat. We work with landowners across east-central and southern Alberta to improve habitat and promote awareness of the plight of the piping plover. Each year, we also conduct piping plover counts on key breeding lakes that allow us to monitor population numbers and distribution, and help us guide habitat improvement activities. In 2015/16, we surveyed 28 waterbodies and observed 163 adults on 15 lakes, with ten or more adults on seven of these lakes. We improved over six km of shoreline habitat by working with landowners to install a temporary electric fence on one lake, implementing seasonal grazing on a second lake to reduce vegetation, and working with ACA Land Management staff to create piping plover breeding habitat on one small alkali waterbody on the Junction Lake Conservation Site. We also installed a viewing platform with interpretive signage and reduced vegetation encroachment on existing piping plover breeding habitat on the same site. Since large-scale recovery efforts began in 2002, we have improved over 58 km of shoreline habitat, with most "critical" piping plover habitat being protected or improved through fencing.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, co-operating landowners, ConocoPhillips, Department of National Defence, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Government of Canada

Project: Piping Plover Recovery

Partnerships: Alberta Environment and Parks, co-operating landowners, ConocoPhillips, Department of National Defence, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Government of Canada

Photo: ACA, Lance Engley

Pronghorn Resource Enhancement and Monitoring

Having evolved on the wide-open prairies of North America, pronghorn did not develop an instinct to jump vertical obstacles. The proliferation of fencing that followed cattle ranching since the 1880s now poses a serious barrier to pronghorn movement. Pronghorn may cross under fence lines in some locations, but this slows down their movement making them susceptible to predators and, in some cases, strips hair off their back causing lacerations and making them vulnerable to infection and frostbite. Replacing the bottom strand with smooth wire and raising it to 18 inches (45 cm) is effective but costly. We are trialing approaches to improve movement through fence barriers at select crossing locations. In 2015/16, we processed images from 50 trail cameras on our study site in Canadian Forces Base Suffield. Images of pronghorn were the most common, followed by elk, coyote and deer. A six-to 13-fold increase in the number of images recorded per field season was achieved by switching the study design to one centred on identified known pronghorn crossing sites. To facilitate migration and address the question of how long it takes for pronghorn to adjust to using modified sites, we're collaborating on a companion project in Montana where the modifications will be in place for 13 to 14 months, as opposed to four to 4.5 months in Alberta. As results become available, we will disseminate information to stakeholders, wildlife managers and conservation groups to increase the effectiveness of efforts to restore movement patterns that have been relied on for thousands of years by pronghorn.

Partnerships

Alberta Fish & Game Association, Bushnell, Cabela's Canada, Canadian Forces Base Suffield, Onefour Research Station, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Safari Club International – Northern Alberta Chapter (Hunting Heritage Fund), TD Friends of the Environment, The Nature Conservancy, University of Montana, World Wildlife Fund

Restoring Natural Habitat for Wildlife

Wildfire control began in Alberta's national parks in the 1930s and on provincial forested land in the 1950s. Fire suppression in Alberta forests has reduced losses of merchantable timber and risks to human settlements, but it has had negative consequences as well. Lack of a natural fire regime has changed vegetation succession, diversity and structure, which provide habitat diversity important for the survival of many wildlife species. The primary focus of the Restoring Natural Habitat for Wildlife project is to restore natural ecosystem patterns and wildlife habitat values within landscape units and focal areas that have aged beyond the natural range of variability. In 2015/16, we worked with two Alberta government ministries, Alberta Environment and Parks and Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, to identify key areas in need of prescribed burning that support mountain sheep and other ungulates. These ministries value ACA's support in identifying and planning habitat enhancements (primarily prescribed burns) on Alberta public lands not influenced by other disturbances (e.g., commercial logging) to restore a more natural state of habitat diversity. We completed field data collection to assess vegetative response six years after a prescribed burn in the Upper North Saskatchewan River drainage. This evaluation will help determine if this prescribed burn is meeting key objectives for wildlife. We also worked with our Land Management staff to plan disturbance regimes on ACA managed lands. The goal is to improve habitat diversity, structure and successional stages that will benefit wildlife. We have developed a treatment site where we anticipate Alberta government wildland firefighters will carry out hand cutting in 2016 to emulate more natural disturbance patterns.

Partnerships

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Fish & Game Association, Wild Sheep Foundation

Sharp-tailed Grouse Habitat Inventory and Stewardship

Sharp-tailed grouse populations are likely declining in some areas of Alberta, particularly in areas where open grassland habitats are fragmented and converted for other uses, such as occurs in northern Alberta. In 2015/16, we met with private landowners, grazing-reserve users and members of the public to elevate concerns of reduced populations of sharp-tailed grouse in northern Alberta. Discussions with the public involved ongoing stewardship of private and public lands that overlap with breeding habitat of sharp-tailed grouse. By promoting awareness of sharp-tailed grouse, our expertise was solicited to help design a wildlife-friendly fence that would minimize the risk of collision by active birds. Additionally, we formed a partnership with the Peace Country Beef & Forage Association, which is studying pasture rejuvenation techniques, to work on habitat stewardship at the Wanham Provincial Grazing Reserve. We also trialed the use of unmanned aerial vehicles to understand their utility for surveying grouse. Although we obtained generally poor results from this work because of the relatively poor resolution of the imbedded camera on the vehicle, newer technological developments could provide more favourable results.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Dunvegan Fish & Game Association, Peace Country Beef & Forage Association, Wanham Provincial Grazing Reserve, Whitemud Provincial Grazing Reserve

Taber Pheasant Festival

In 2015, the Taber Pheasant Festival celebrated its fifth year. This week-long hunting event always kicks off with a novice-focused hunting weekend predominantly run by the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association. The six days that follow the novice hunts focus on regular hunting opportunities at 40 locations within the Municipal District of Taber. Because of the popularity of the festival, we happily increased hunting opportunities by 33 percent from 30 sites to 40. Roughly 800 hunters, including 85 novice hunters, participated in this event, and we released 5,100 male ring-necked pheasants over the course of the week. Most hunters were residents of Alberta, but nearly 10 percent travelled from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec and the United States. Sponsorship has increased dramatically over the past five years, with a 36 percent increase in Gold-level sponsors ($2,500+). This year we included a photo contest, a scotch tasting night, and a culinary evening featuring five pheasant recipes. Canadian Destination Group (Heritage Inn) funded a video highlighting the Taber Pheasant Festival for its tourism, culinary and conservation efforts. The festival has gained recognition not only for its hunting opportunities but also for the positive economic and cultural benefits it has fostered in the area by winning the Outstanding Sustainable Tourism Alto Award from Travel Alberta.

Partnerships

Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Culinary Tourism Alliance, Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Beretta/Benelli/Franchi, Cabela's, Cycle Works, Fowl Play Outfitters, Heritage Inn Taber/Canadian Destinations Group, Landowners, Municipal District of Taber, Pheasants Forever, Sandspit, Taber & District Chamber of Commerce, Town of Taber, Town of Vauxhall, Vortex

Upland Gamebird Retention Surveys

ACA is working with partners on several projects that focus on improving habitat features to benefit upland gamebird populations (e.g., Habitat Legacy Partnership, Demonstration Farm). We conduct upland gamebird surveys to monitor fluctuations in recruitment and encounter rates among years to help us design future habitat treatments. We use trained dogs to locate birds along select routes in late summer and early fall, and provide survey information to the hunting community each fall to encourage hunter participation. We also trial soft and hard release approaches to improve the survival of released pheasants. Although success rates can be low, released poults have the potential to establish pheasant populations in areas of good habitat. Our ACA/4-H Raise and Release program has been enthusiastically supported over the past two years, with the number of kids participating in the program increasing each year. Our work to investigate approaches to improve the success of released pheasants is important to support that program.

Our 2015 upland gamebird surveys indicated another good year of pheasant and grey partridge recruitment. The handlers walked 46 km over 21 hours of survey time and flushed 155 pheasants and 292 partridge, which translates to 4.6 flushes on average per hour or a flush every 13 minutes. Compared with 2014, encounter rates in 2015 were up 20 percent for pheasants but down 40 percent for partridge, although 2014 was a particularly good year for grey partridge in Alberta and 2015 rates were still higher than the long-term average. For our release trials, 29 percent of young hens survived to 15 weeks using soft release methods compared with 17 percent that survived to 17 weeks using hard release methods (no support). No clear differences in survival or dispersal were observed between two types of soft release approaches trialed in 2015.

Partnerships

Landowners, Pheasants Forever – Calgary Chapter, Stamp Seeds, volunteers

Photo: ACA, Colin Eyo

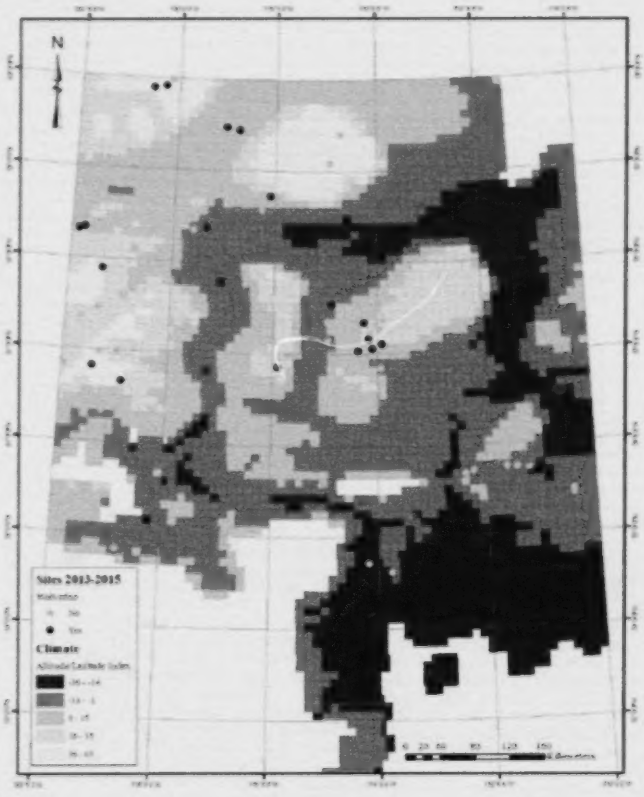
Working with Alberta's Trappers to Map Wolverine Distribution and Identify Conservation Risks

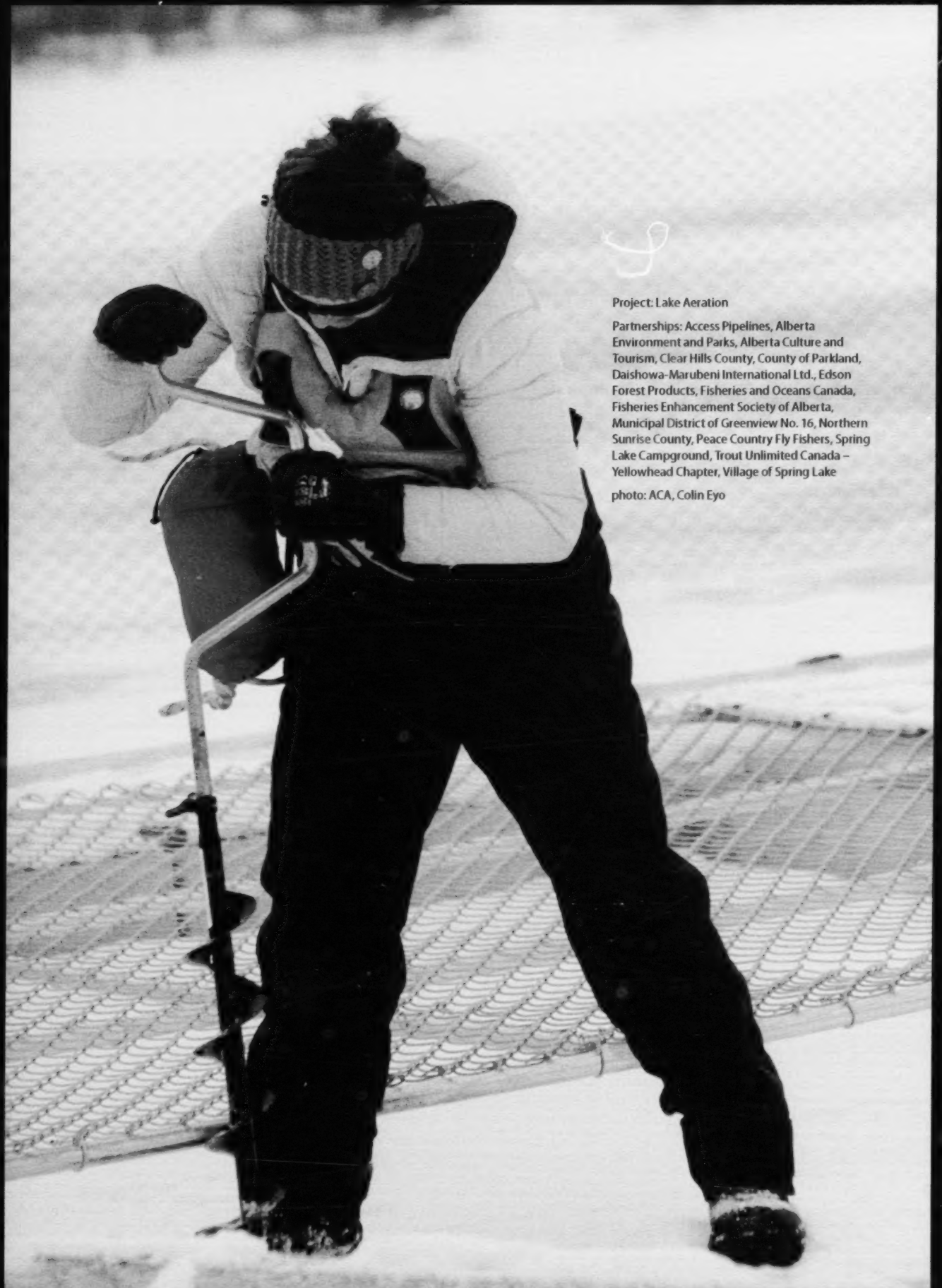
We are partnering with the Alberta Trappers' Association to identify locations where wolverines occur in the province and to determine the major factors associated with their distribution. To do this, bait stations with remote cameras are set up within the Registered Fur Management Areas of volunteer trappers. Trappers check and maintain these sites throughout the winter and then provide the photographs to biologists, who analyze them to determine what site characteristics are associated with a higher probability of finding wolverines and other species. Sampling was focused on boreal regions of the province during 2013/14, 2014/15 and again in 2015/16, within a study area that roughly stretches from Cold Lake to Grande Prairie and north to the Northwest Territories border. At least 30 individual wolverines were detected at 22 of the 47 sites in 2013/14. During the winter of 2014/15, wolverines were detected at 18 of 62 sites; unique markings identified at least 19 different wolverines.

Occupancy analysis indicated that proximity to the Lower or Upper Boreal Highlands natural subregions increased the probability that wolverines were present. Wolverines tended to be found in areas with plentiful conifer forest cover and were less likely to be found in areas with high road and well density or locations close to human populations. The analysis also showed that areas expected to have cooler relative temperatures (inferred from elevation and latitude) were more likely to be occupied by wolverines. We also found genetic types in the boreal that are more commonly found in the Arctic and along the Pacific coast than they are in Alberta's Rocky Mountains. Similar to wolverines, lynx occupancy was higher in areas with high conifer forest cover and in areas predicted to have cooler temperatures (i.e., farther north and higher in elevation). In contrast, fisher occurrence was greater in areas farther south in latitude and with high deciduous forest cover. We anticipate gaining more clarity on the habitat and environmental features important to wolverines and other furbearers as we continue to work with trappers over the coming winters.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Trappers' Association, Animal Damage Control – A Division of Bushman Inc., Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Environment and Climate Change Canada, Harvest Operations Corp., Shell FuellingChange, Trapper Gord Homestead & Survival, University of Alberta, individual donor: W. Sullivan





Project: Lake Aeration

Partnerships: Access Pipelines, Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Culture and Tourism, Clear Hills County, County of Parkland, Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Edson Forest Products, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Fisheries Enhancement Society of Alberta, Municipal District of Greenview No. 16, Northern Sunrise County, Peace Country Fly Fishers, Spring Lake Campground, Trout Unlimited Canada – Yellowhead Chapter, Village of Spring Lake

photo: ACA, Colin Eyo

Fisheries Program

Fishing is one of Alberta's favourite pastimes so ACA has an entire team of biologists dedicated to keeping its lakes and fish healthy. This year we, along with partners, stocked over 60 waterbodies and considered another 205 for the Fish Stocking Program, conducted angler surveys, interviewing over 1,200 anglers, and worked at restoring sport fisheries in some of Alberta's lakes that have become prone to algal blooms.

Overall, the success of our Fisheries program activities in 2015/16 involved the support of over 32 partners consisting of provincial and federal governments, industry, watershed groups, non-governmental organizations, counties/ municipalities, and other interested groups.

2015/16 Overview

- Over 120,000 twenty-cm long trout (115,150 rainbow and 5,000 brown) stocked into 60 waterbodies.
- For the first time, we added brown trout into seven ponds to provide anglers greater diversity in their fishing experience.
- Screened 205 new waterbodies for EFS expansion, four of which met initial criteria for further evaluation.
- Surveyed 27 rivers/tributaries, four lakes, and seven ponds, and generated information on fish population status, distribution, recreational harvest, spawning habitat, and habitat fragmentation.
- 1,275 anglers interviewed during creel surveys.
- Over 1,080 river kilometers surveyed.

Project: Enhanced Fish Stocking

Partnerships: Access Pipeline, Agrium Redwater, Aquality Environmental, Aux Sable Energy, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Complete Crossings, Dow AgroSciences, City of Red Deer

photo: ACA, Diana Rung

Angler Survey on Aerated Lakes: Swan and Spring Lakes

To prevent winterkill of stocked trout populations, ACA uses various aeration techniques to enhance winter dissolved oxygen levels at 16 waterbodies across the province. Increased oxygen levels contribute to year-round survival of stocked fish and create sport fisheries capable of producing large trout. In the summer of 2015, we conducted angler surveys to assess angling pressure, catch and harvest at two popular aerated lakes in northwest Alberta: Swan and Spring lakes. At Swan Lake, we interviewed 341 anglers who fished for 750.5 h, resulting in an estimated 2,149 anglers fishing for 5,130.7 h or 31.5 h/ha of angling pressure during the survey period. Spring Lake experienced higher angling pressure. We interviewed 592 anglers who fished for 1,258 h, resulting in an estimated 4,236 anglers fishing for 8,996.8 h or 224.4 h/ha of angling pressure. Catch rate was lower at Swan Lake than Spring Lake, with anglers catching 0.16 rainbow trout/h (i.e., on average one fish in six hours) at Swan Lake and 0.47 rainbow trout/h and 0.03 brook trout/h (i.e., on average one fish in two hours) at Spring Lake.

Partnerships

Government of Canada – Canada Summer Jobs

Arctic Grayling Adult Density: Kakwa River

Project postponed due to record low streamflows during the summer of 2015 that prevented fish sampling. We have rescheduled field surveys for the summer of 2016.

Partnerships

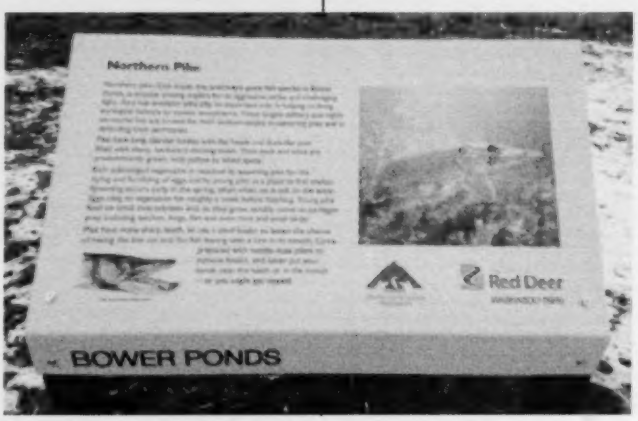
N/A

Enhanced Fish Stocking Project

The Enhanced Fish Stocking project provides anglers with increased opportunities to catch and harvest 20-cm rainbow trout and brown trout in areas of Alberta where angling opportunities are limited or do not exist. Recipient waterbodies are prone to winterkill and require annual stocking of trout to maintain angling opportunities. In 2015/16, for the first time, we included brown trout in our stocking plan to provide anglers with greater diversity in their fishing experience. Rainbow trout and brown trout stockings were completed through nine contracts: eight with private growers and one with the Government of Alberta fish hatchery. We stocked a total of 60 waterbodies with 115,150 rainbow trout and seven waterbodies with 5,000 brown trout.

Partnerships

Access Pipeline, Agrium Redwater, Aquality Environmental, Aux Sable Energy, City of Fort Saskatchewan, Complete Crossings, Dow AgroSciences, City of Red Deer



Fish Stocking Expansion – New Lakes

With approximately 1,100 lakes with sport fish and over 300,000 anglers, Alberta has more anglers but a tiny fraction of the number of lakes of the other Prairie provinces. Given the relatively limited fishing opportunities in Alberta, ACA is working to identify new lakes to stock with rainbow trout through the Enhanced Fish Stocking (EFS) project. Initial assessments in 2014/15 identified Edmonton, Calgary, Medicine Hat and Airdrie as priority areas for EFS expansion. Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Lethbridge and Red Deer areas were identified as second priority for EFS expansion. In 2015/16, we identified 188 waterbodies within a 50 km radius of primary and secondary focus areas and 17 waterbodies outside of focus areas. Waterbodies were identified through desktop queries and recommendations from interest groups. From the initial 205 waterbodies, 41 appeared to have fisheries potential; however, because most of these waterbodies were on private property, we were only able to evaluate habitat and water quality at 21 of the 41 sites. Four of the 21 waterbodies were found to have sufficient water depth and dissolved oxygen to be considered for stocking with rainbow trout. We will actively pursue development of a trout fishery at a minimum of one of these sites in 2016/17. In addition, we investigated the suitability of two stormwater ponds, one in Airdrie and one in Cochrane, to support recreational angling opportunities. However, both stormwater ponds failed to meet the necessary summer dissolved oxygen requirements for rainbow trout survival.

Partnerships

Alberta Fish & Game Association, City of Airdrie, Town of Cochrane

Fish Stocking Expansion – New Species and Strains

In 2015/16, we expanded the Enhanced Fish Stocking (EFS) project to include stocking of brown trout in addition to the rainbow trout we typically stock. We also collaborated with staff from the Government of Alberta fish hatchery to develop a 2016/17 study to evaluate field performance of two strains of rainbow trout that we commonly stock. The seven ponds that received brown trout were selected based on their popularity with anglers, potential to overwinter trout and proximity to urban centres. To evaluate brown trout stocking, we assessed angling effort, catch and harvest rates, and angler satisfaction and motivation at Beaumont Pond and Morinville Fish and Game Pond. Heritage Pond near Morinville is stocked with rainbow trout only and was included in our study for comparison. Angler interviews supplemented with trail-camera data were used to evaluate the fisheries. Angler effort was high at all three ponds: 2,158 h/ha at Beaumont, 657 h/ha at Morinville and 435 h/ha at Heritage. Brown trout catch and harvest at Beaumont and Morinville ponds were disproportionately low and essentially supplemental to rainbow trout rates. However, anglers were largely satisfied with their fishing experience, with 94 percent, 75 percent and 80 percent expressing satisfaction at Beaumont, Morinville and Heritage ponds, respectively. Brown trout stocking appears most appropriate for EFS ponds that receive heavy angling pressure or have the potential to successfully overwinter fish. Preparations are now underway for the upcoming field evaluation of performance of two rainbow trout strains that we commonly stock.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Government of Canada – Canada Summer Jobs

Lake Aeration

ACA aerates 16 waterbodies throughout Alberta during the winter months to reduce the chance of winter fish kills. To date, we have used surface aeration to improve oxygen levels in waterbodies and ensure fish survive the winter, but in July 2015, we became aware of a relatively obscure law under Section 263 of the Criminal Code that creates a significant level of risk for manslaughter charges to be brought against ACA staff, management and the Board of Directors. It indicates that if a member of the public drowns in a hole created in the ice as a result of our aeration project, we are at risk of being charged with manslaughter. In response, we changed our aeration methods during the winter of 2015/16 from the usual surface aeration to a subsurface diffuser system enclosed by a dock and chain-link system to contain the

Project: Fish Stocking Expansion – New Lakes

Partnerships: Alberta Fish & Game Association, City of Airdrie, Town of Cochrane

photo: ACA, Britt Keeling

open water created by aeration; the usual surface aerators were deployed on five lakes by volunteer third parties (Municipal District of Greenview, Northern Sunrise County, and private individual) and AEP. However, despite our best efforts, the subsurface diffuser systems did not produce the results we were hoping for. Containing the hole created in the ice within the dock system proved to be difficult. In many instances, we were forced to reduce the amount of air pumped by the diffusers into the water column, thereby reducing the amount of oxygen entering the water to the point that aeration was ineffective at maintaining adequate dissolved oxygen levels to successfully overwinter fish. In some cases, diffuser systems were shut down as a safe-guard to reduce the risk of winterkill where dissolved oxygen levels suggest potential for the lake to naturally overwinter without intervention. In contrast, dissolved oxygen levels remained good (above 3 mg/L) throughout most of the water column at lakes aerated with surface aerators by third parties, ensuring good potential for overwinter fish survival in these lakes. We are happy to report that following further discussions with the provincial government, the potential criminal liabilities issues are now resolved and ACA will resume surface aeration during the winter of 2016/17.

Partnerships

Access Pipelines, Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Culture and Tourism, Clear Hills County, County of Parkland, Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Edson Forest Products, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Fisheries Enhancement Society of Alberta, Municipal District of Greenview No. 16, Northern Sunrise County, Peace Country Fly Fishers, Spring Lake Campground, Trout Unlimited Canada – Yellowhead Chapter, Village of Spring Lake

New Lake Aeration Development

ACA aerates 16 waterbodies throughout Alberta during the winter months to reduce the chance of winter fish kills and provide Albertans with recreational angling in areas of the province where such fishing opportunities are otherwise limited. With a levy increase in 2014, additional funds were allocated to our Fisheries Program to expand our aeration project. We identified West Dollar and Grovedale lakes in the Peace River region and Hansen's Reservoir and Winchell Lake in the Rocky Mountain House region as sites for developing new aeration infrastructure in 2015/16. Hansen's Reservoir currently has two windmill aerators, but they have been ineffective at maintaining adequate oxygen levels year round. We conducted water-quality sampling at Winchell Lake during the spring, measured dissolved oxygen monthly at Hansen's Reservoir, and collected baseline water quality and bathymetry data at West Dollar Lake. We held discussions with Mountain View County and Fortis Alberta regarding access to county property and power installations to Winchell Lake and Hansen's Reservoir. Discussions are also ongoing with Alberta Environment and Parks and the Municipal District of Greenview regarding land disposition and fisheries access site development at West Dollar Lake. However, our plan to develop and deploy surface aeration infrastructure on these four waterbodies in 2015 was delayed until 2016.

Partnerships

N/A

North Saskatchewan River Drainage Fish Sustainability Index Data Gaps

Alberta Environment and Park's Fish Sustainability Index is a standardized process of assessment that provides a landscape-level overview of fish sustainability within the province and enables broad-scale evaluation of management actions and land-use planning. Bull trout is a native sport species designated as Threatened in Alberta and is particularly sensitive to habitat change. In the summer of 2015, ACA partnered with Sundre Forest Products (SFP) to assess bull trout distribution and abundance in areas of mutual interest to SFP and government land-use planners in SFP's Forest Management Area. We used backpack electrofishing gear to sample 50 sites randomly distributed throughout the headwaters of the Baptiste River, Pineneedle Creek and surrounding streams, and Trout Creek. We captured 648 fish, including seven bull trout, 502 brook trout and 121 brown trout in the three focal areas. The remainder of our catch included small numbers of longnose dace, mountain whitefish, spoonhead sculpin and white sucker. Only our catch of brook trout and brown trout included fish <50 mm fork length, which were likely young-of-the-year. Our study provides land-use managers with information on fish species distribution and abundance that is necessary to minimize land-use impacts to fish, evaluate bull trout status and otherwise balance the diverse values of the the North Saskatchewan River watershed.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Sundre Forest Products

Sport Fisheries Restoration at Isle and Hasse Lakes

In recent decades, changes in watershed land use have resulted in increased nutrient runoff, particularly phosphorus, into many lakes, including Isle and Hasse lakes, which has led to increased intensity and frequency of algal blooms, especially blue-green cyanobacteria blooms, and fish kills. Recurring fish kills in both Isle and Hasse lakes have decimated what used to be vibrant and popular recreational sport fisheries. The primary goal of this project is to support and

collaborate with local efforts to reduce nutrient loading at both lakes, improve water quality and restore the fish communities and associated sport fisheries. During our survey in 2015, we found no evidence of large fish species in Hasse Lake, catching only fathead minnows and brook stickleback. In contrast, we captured adult northern pike, walleye and yellow perch, as well as white sucker and fathead minnow, in Isle Lake. Before our survey, local reports from Isle Lake indicated a complete loss of sport fish making these findings both surprising and encouraging because it appears some sport fish may have survived the kill event or have migrated from nearby waterbodies. We developed numerous partnerships with key stakeholders throughout the watersheds in support of the project and shared results of our field surveys with them. These stakeholders included the Lake Isle/Lac Ste. Anne Water Quality Society, Alberta Lake Management Society, St. Albert Fish & Game Club, Edmonton Trout Club, Lakes of Parkland County community group, and agricultural producers at a Parkland County and Lac Ste. Anne Alternative Land Use Services launch event and an Isle Lake Watershed Awareness Day. We also provided technical guidance and recommendations to Parkland and Lac Ste. Anne counties, delivering on-the-ground restoration activities in collaboration with local agricultural producers. We will continue to participate in local initiatives and provide support through data collection, communication, coordination and delivery of on the ground restoration projects.

Partnerships

Environment Canada – Environmental Damages Fund, Lake Isle & Lac Ste. Anne Water Quality Management Society, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, Parkland County and Lac Ste. Anne County Alternative Land Use Services Program, Sturgeon River Watershed Alliance

Stocked Trout Survival – Avian Predation at Selected Enhanced Fish Stocking Ponds

The Enhanced Fish Stocking (EFS) project creates recreational fisheries in areas of the province where such opportunities do not otherwise exist. Through EFS, we stock approximately 120,000 catchable-sized (i.e., 20 cm) trout into 60 ponds each year, creating "put-and-take fisheries" that allow anglers to harvest up to five fish per day. Recent evidence suggests some of these waterbodies may not be capable of supporting trout survival beyond mid-summer, and predation by cormorants is suspected to be an issue at some waterbodies. We have observed direct evidence of cormorant predation on stocked fish at Mirror Reservoir. In this project, we endeavoured to estimate cormorant predation at Mirror Reservoir, Bashaw and Vegreville ponds, and Windsor Lake. Additionally, we attempted to discourage cormorants at Mirror Reservoir by deploying avian deterrents. Cormorant activity at Mirror Reservoir was 14.9 and 39.7 times greater after first and second stockings than before stocking, and we attribute high cormorant abundance and activity to be significant factors in the very low abundance of rainbow trout in Mirror Reservoir. We also concluded that our deterrents were ineffective at discouraging cormorants from visiting Mirror Reservoir. Cormorant abundance and activity were estimated to be low at Bashaw Pond and Windsor Lake, and no cormorants were documented at Vegreville Pond.

Partnerships

Government of Canada – Canada Summer Jobs

Swan River Arctic Grayling: A Stock and Watershed Connectivity Survey

The Swan River Arctic grayling population has experienced declines in abundance and distribution from habitat degradation and fragmentation largely due to extensive road networks established by industry. The watershed has a high density of stream crossings, culverts being the most predominant. In 2015, ACA completed watercourse crossing assessments to determine the level of fragmentation due to stream crossings and the relative abundance and population structure of Arctic grayling. We assessed 218 stream crossings throughout the watershed using the Government of Alberta Watercourse Inspection Protocol. We found 24.8 percent of the watershed was fragmented by impassable stream crossings. We angled 62 sites throughout the watershed and captured a total of 431 Arctic grayling, most of which were immature. For immature fish, which ranged in size from 150 to 282 mm fork length ($n = 280$), average catch rate was 1.48 fish/h. Adult fish (>283 mm fork length) were too few ($n = 6$) to calculate catch rates. Catch rates were much lower in more fragmented streams than in non-impeded streams. Restoring connectivity within the Swan River watershed could contribute to sustaining Arctic grayling populations.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks

Westslope Cutthroat Trout Recovery and Watershed Disturbance

Westslope cutthroat trout (WSCT) in Alberta is considered *Threatened* under Canada's *Species at Risk Act*, and long-term survival of the species requires identification, protection and restoration of strongholds where genetically pure fish remain. One of the major threats to the species is increased deposition of fine sediment into streams from human-caused landscape disturbances. The upper Oldman River watershed is the largest remaining core area of genetically pure WSCT in Alberta and has undergone varying degrees of human-caused landscape disturbance. The objective of this study is to document abundance, population structure and distribution of genetically pure WSCT in the upper Oldman River watershed relative to current sediment and habitat measures across a range of disturbance levels. In the summer of 2015, we completed year one of a two-year study sampling fish, sediment and habitat in the upper Oldman River watershed. We electrofished 36 reaches along Dutch Creek (n = 10), Hidden Creek (n = 10), White Creek (n = 7) and headwater tributaries (n = 9). We measured sediment quantity, preferred spawning gravels (<35 mm), pool frequency and relative streambed compaction. In all, we captured 2,065 WSCT and collected 373 tissue samples from streams where genetic status was undefined. Average catch-per-unit-effort was highest in White Creek (negligible disturbance), followed by Dutch Creek (high disturbance) and Hidden Creek (moderate disturbance). Fish abundance decreased as the frequency of pools decreased, but not in a consistent pattern with disturbance level. White Creek exhibited the highest pool frequency, sediment quantity, percent spawning gravels and evidence of anoxic sediments. Availability of pool habitat is a key driver influencing WSCT abundance. Links between pool frequency, colmation (compaction) and sediment quantity reflect pools as settling areas where deposits accumulate and compact. Consequently streams with more pools retain more of the sediments transported there. White Creek is crucial to the sustainability of WSCT in the upper Oldman River watershed, with fish abundances exceeding those of Dutch and Hidden creeks by seven-fold and ten-fold margins, respectively.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks

Photo: ACA, Jason Blackburn

Project: Management Plan Development
Partners: Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Fish & Game Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Shell Canada Energy, Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters
Photo: ACA, Roy Schmelzeisen

Land Management

ACA's Land Management Program is all about conservation of important wildlife and fish habitat across Alberta. Our conservation sites span hundreds of thousands of acres across Alberta, each listed in our *Alberta Discover Guide*. We conserve wild places for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy. Each site has its own characteristics that provide an array of opportunities to hunt, fish, forage or view wildlife.

Each year we acquire new conservation sites by securing habitat through direct purchase or donation. Thanks to landowners and partners, we were able to secure four new sites and two expansions this year. Landowner Habitat Program agreements see ACA working with landowners to conserve key fish and wildlife habitat while enhancing recreational access on deeded lands. Another responsibility of the Land Management Program is riparian repair, allowing us to provide an important role in ecosystem function.

The success of our Land Management program activities is a testament to the support and effort of over 50 partnerships, including government, industry, non-governmental organizations, counties/municipalities, leaseholders, private landowners, corporate partners and other interested groups. These vital partnerships result in an overall reduction in the amount of levy dollars required to conserve and manage over 200,000 acres (80,937 ha) of habitat.

2015/16 Overview

- Added four new conservation sites and two expansions, totaling 1,241 ac (502 ha).
- Secured $1,500,000+ in lands (approximate value).
- Currently managing 45 Landowner Habitat Program Agreements protecting 7,731 ac (3,129 ha) of wildlife and fish habitat.
- Conserved 424 ac with the addition of one new landowner habitat retention agreement.
- Collaborated with AEP on management of Crown conservation sites (disposition process ongoing).
- Inspected 173 conservation sites with maintenance and repairs completed on 68 sites.
- Habitat and recreational access improvements/enhancements on 25 conservation sites.
- Planted 120,000 trees and shrubs on Conservation Sites.
- Spent 13,000+ hours on conservation site management and maintenance.
- Maintained 26 fisheries access sites of which two received site upgrades and enhancements.
- Installed 17 conservation site signs, including boundary and "Foot Access Only" signs on 17 sites.
- Provided recommendations on 79 land use referrals on conservation sites.
- Reviewed and updated 19 management plans; eight new management plans completed.
- Completed eight on-the-ground riparian enhancements protecting over 3.1 km of riparian habitat and conserved over 69 ac (28 ha) of riparian habitat.
- Planted 8,416 trees and shrubs were for bank stabilization.
- Completed six riparian health assessments; water samples taken from 12 sites as part of baseline data collection and ongoing water quality monitoring.
- Collaborated with over 12 watershed groups and other organizations across Alberta.

Conservation Site Management

ACA currently manages and maintains 346 conservation sites, which include over 210,000 ac (85,000 ha) of titled and Crown land in Alberta. Our success in managing and enhancing conservation sites is achieved using a collaborative approach with a growing number of partners and volunteers across Alberta. Our Conservation Site Management Program is responsible for stewardship of these sites through individual habitat management plans. In 2015/16, we inspected and maintained habitat on 241 conservation sites. Our team also completed enhancement projects on 25 conservation sites, including planting over 120,000 trees and shrubs. Tree and shrub planting and other vegetation enhancements will benefit a variety of ungulates, upland gamebirds and waterfowl. Recreational enhancements were completed at four sites, these included foot-access gates and vehicle barriers. We installed 17 conservation site signs and provided recommendations on 79 land-use referrals. We also managed public access on two sites through a reservation system. Further, we continued discussions with Alberta Environment and Parks to determine long-term partnership roles and responsibilities at Crown-owned conservation sites. Through our efforts in managing these important wildlife and fish habitat conservation areas, we continue to provide additional recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Fish & Game Association, Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Alberta Trail Riding Association, Bow River Irrigation District, Buffalo Lake Naturalists, Calfrac, Canon Evergreen, ConocoPhillips, County of Lethbridge, County of Newell, County of Stettler, County of Taber, County of Warner,

creative sentencing (from a Plains Midstream conviction), Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Dow AgroSciences, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Eastern Irrigation District, Edmonton and Area Land Trust, Environment and Climate Change Canada, landowners, MULTISAR, Myrnam River Ridge Riders Snowmobile Club, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters, Shell Canada Energy, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, The Carbon Farmer Inc., Tree Canada, volunteer stewards, Westlock Whitetails Junior Forest Warden Club, Wildlife Habitat Canada

Corporate Partners Program

Throughout northern Alberta, the cumulative effect of habitat loss and fragmentation from human disturbance of natural ecosystems is a major concern. As industrial activity continues to expand, greater emphasis is being placed on loss and alteration of habitat. Our Corporate Partners Program was initiated in 2002/03 with a goal to collaborate with industry and other organizations to conserve important wildlife and fish habitat. Our securement efforts are guided by focus areas and ranking criteria that are developed collaboratively between ACA and our corporate partners. Corporate partnerships and collaborations with other conservation organizations allow us to maximize our conservation impact and the overall effectiveness of our securement efforts. Partnerships may consist of short- or long-term agreements. In 2015/16, we acquired four parcels of land, resulting in the creation of three new conservation sites and the expansion of one existing site. These acquisitions represent 788 ac (318.9 ha) of high-quality habitat with an estimated land value of approximately $775,000. Our goal is to continue conserving key habitats using a collaborative approach and work toward expanding these opportunities by developing additional corporate partnerships.

Partnerships

Alberta Fish & Game Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Shell Canada Energy, Suncor Energy Foundation, Wild Elk Federation

Fisheries Access Site Management

ACA's Land Management Program encompasses activities intended to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and to increase sustainable recreational opportunities, including angling and hunting. One of the activities of the program is the delivery of the Fisheries Access Site Management Program, which provides angling opportunities to key streams, rivers and lakes throughout the province. In 2015/16, we inspected and maintained 26 fisheries access sites and commissioned 15 maintenance contracts. We upgraded two sites with improvements to parking facilities and a boat launch. We engaged 16 partners this year, who generously contributed financial resources or in-kind assistance. We also continued discussions with Alberta Environment and Parks representatives to determine long-term partnership roles and responsibilities at Crown-owned fisheries access sites across the province.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks – Fish and Wildlife Division, and Lands and Range Division, Alberta

Corporate Partners Program Securement Transactions in 2015/16

Project Name	Corporate Partner	Size (ac)	Special Features
Whispering Timber (Expansion) (W½-33-086-21-W5M)	Suncor Energy Foundation Alberta Fish & Game Association Wild Elk Federation	307	This parcel of land is located 36 km north of Peace River. Habitat consists of regenerating mixed wood forest. Wildlife in this area include moose, elk, white-tailed deer, black bears and wolves.
North Long Lake (NE-15-085-24-W5M)	Suncor Energy Foundation Alberta Fish & Game Association	160	This site is located 53 km northwest of Peace River. The Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) Scaup Conservation Site lies directly southeast of this site. Habitat includes a mosaic of mixed wood forest and wetlands. Moose sign is abundant on this site.
Wintergreen (NW-16-052-11-W4M)	Suncor Energy Foundation Alberta Fish & Game Association Ducks Unlimited Canada	161	This site is located 12 km north of Innisfree. Habitat is primarily deciduous forest with ephemeral wetlands and a small cultivated field. Wildlife in the area include moose, deer, black bear and upland gamebirds.
Camp Creek (SE-07-061-05-W5M)	Shell	160	This site is located approximately 25 km northwest of Barrhead. Old-growth forest provides habitat for small furbearers, songbirds, moose and other ungulates. An alfalfa field and cereal crop cover a portion of this site.
TOTAL		788	

Fish & Game Association, Alberta Lottery Fund – Community Facility Enhancement Program, Clearwater County, County of Newell, Devon Canada Corporation, Municipal District of Greenview, Municipal District of Northern Lights, Municipal District of Rocky View, North Raven River Working Group, Peace Country Fly Fishers, Shell Canada Energy, Trout Unlimited Canada – Central and Yellowhead Chapters, Wetaskiwin County

Landowner Habitat Program

Alberta's population has been steadily increasing, reaching over four million in 2013. In less than 10 years (2005 to 2014), the population grew by 800,000, and it has continued to grow in 2015 despite a slumping economy. A national study by Global Forest Watch suggests that approximately 410,000 km^2 of land has been altered in Alberta—more natural landscape than in any other province. Almost two-thirds of the province (62 percent) has been altered by industrial or agricultural development. Urban and rural development and expansion have also contributed to habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation. The Landowner Habitat Program was initiated to help conserve key habitat and reduce habitat loss on privately owned land. The program compensates landowners who are willing to sign a legally binding agreement to retain habitat for a term of five to 20 years. A condition of the agreements is that landowners provide reasonable public foot access. Participants in this program are acknowledged on a project sign and provided with Use Respect – Ask First signs to display along their property perimeters. The program currently manages 45 agreements across the province, which protect approximately 7,731 ac (3,129 ha) of wildlife and fish habitat.

Partnerships

Landowners

Management Plan Development

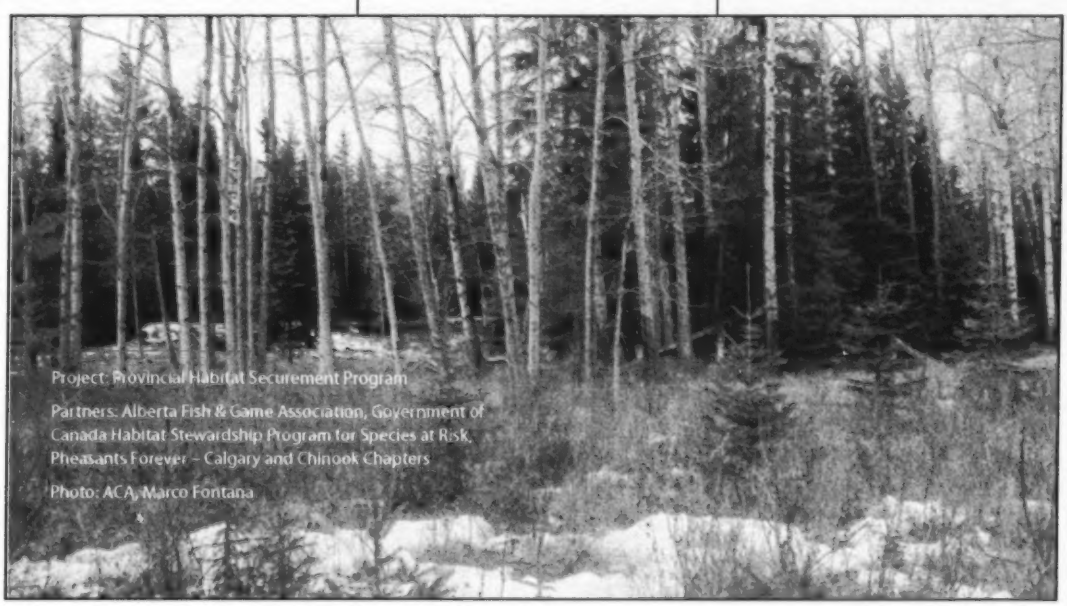
ACA currently manages and maintains 346 conservation sites, which we have secured with the help of a variety of partners. To manage these sites effectively, management plans are developed for each site. Emphasis is placed on developing detailed habitat management objectives that maintain the ecological integrity of the site and provide complementary recreational opportunities. ACA works with our partners to develop management plans that identify the site history and features and the management vision, guidelines and planned activities for the site. These management plans are reviewed by ACA and our partners, as required, or at a minimum on a term basis (e.g., after five years) to ensure that we are delivering on the goals and objectives identified in the management plans. In 2015/16, we developed eight new management plans for sites secured since 2014 and reviewed and updated 19 management plans.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Fish & Game Association, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Shell Canada Energy, Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters

Provincial Habitat Securement Program

Alberta's population reached four million in 2013, the largest census gain on record, and it continued to grow in 2015 despite a slumping economy. Alberta's natural land base is under intense pressure from a variety of sources related to its population growth, including agricultural, municipal



Project: Provincial Habitat Securement Program

Partners: Alberta Fish & Game Association, Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters

Photo: ACA, Marco Fontana

and industrial development. This trend is expected to continue as the population grows and demand for land continues. Our Provincial Habitat Securement Program conserves important wildlife and fish habitat through land purchases, land donations, and protective notations on Crown land. Securing habitat ensures these lands will be conserved in perpetuity to benefit our valued wildlife and fish resources and to provide Alberta's outdoor enthusiasts with year-round, sustainable recreational opportunities. Twenty-eight priority focus areas help guide securement efforts and opportunities. Collaborative partnerships with conservation groups, industry, various companies and private individuals allow us to maximize our conservation impact and the efficiency of our securement efforts. Together in 2015/16, we completed two land acquisitions, which conserved 453.5 ac (183.5 ha). These lands have an estimated value of approximately $758,000.

Partnerships

Alberta Fish & Game Association, Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters

Riparian Conservation

Riparian areas provide important ecological services and functions and are critical to maintaining watershed health. However, riparian habitat throughout Alberta has been degraded by a variety of intensive land-use practices. Riparian areas are complex ecosystems; proper management of this sensitive habitat is essential to maintain water quality and habitat integrity for wildlife and fish species that depend on it. The primary goal of ACA's Riparian Conservation Program is to protect and restore riparian areas in priority watersheds through on-the-ground restoration projects and outreach and education initiatives. Our collaborative partnerships with landowners, industry, government, watershed groups and other stakeholders are integral to project delivery. In 2015/16, we focused conservation efforts in the following priority watersheds: Beaverlodge, Edson, Owl, Raven, North Raven and Oldman Rivers; and Clear, Todd, Beaver, Drywood, Yarrow, Lyndon, Pincher and Indianfarm Creeks and their associated tributaries. We delivered eight enhancement projects using a variety of management tools, including implementing landowner habitat lease agreements to conserve 69 ac (28 ha) of riparian and associated upland habitat, planting 8,416 white spruce trees and willow stakes, and installing 3.15 km of mainly wildlife friendly fencing to protect important riparian habitat. We also monitored water quality and riparian health to help evaluate the effectiveness of riparian enhancements, supported landowners with riparian enhancement activities, and communicated our Riparian Conservation Program initiatives to various communities. Our efforts have contributed to improvements in riparian habitat health and have positively influenced how landowners and leaseholders steward their land.

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Parks, ConocoPhillips, County of Grande Prairie, Enerplus, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Government of Canada, landowners, Oldman Watershed Council, Syncrude Canada Ltd., Tree Canada, Trout Unlimited Canada, West County Watershed Society

Habitat Securement Program Transactions in 2015/16

Project Name	Securement Tool & Partners	Size (ac)	Special Features
Drake Pt. SE-17-036-04-W5M	A collaborative acquisition between ACA and the Provincial Court of Alberta	133.5	This site is located on the Raven River approximately 50 km southeast of Rocky Mountain House. It occurs in dry mixed wood habitat and contains valuable riparian and instream fish habitat because the river meanders through this site. The river supports angling opportunities for brook and brown trout. This unique site provides fish spawning habitat and supports a variety of other wildlife, including deer, elk, moose, black bear, ruffed grouse and waterfowl.
Silver Sage (Expansion) SW-09-004-05-W4M SE-09-004-05-W4M	A collaborative acquisition between ACA, AFGA, Government of Canada Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, and Pheasants Forever – Calgary and Chinook Chapters	320	This site is located approximately 18 km south of Manyberries. It expands the Silver Sage Conservation Site to 2,371 ac and creates greater connectivity across the landscape. Ketchum Creek flows through a portion of this site. Native grassland restoration activities are planned to improve habitat diversity for wildlife. Wildlife found here and in the immediate area include pronghorn, sharp-tailed grouse, and sensitive species such as ferruginous hawk, Sprague's pipit and greater sage-grouse.
TOTAL		453.5	

ACA Conservation Reports

The following is a list of final project reports published in 2015/16. All of these reports can be found on our website or through the Government of Alberta Library.

Annual Summary reports for all on-going projects can also be found on our website.

Fisheries

Hurkett, B, and J. Blackburn. 2015. Distribution and abundance of the migratory bull trout population in the Castle River drainage, 2011 – 2014. Technical Report, T-2015-001, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. 37 pp + App.

Lebedynski, N. 2016. Aerated lakes angler survey: Swan and Spring Lakes, Alberta, 2015. Data Report, D-2016-101, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Peace River, Alberta, Canada. 10 pp + App.

Keeling, B., and K. Fitzsimmons. 2016. Angler survey of single- and multi-species stocked ponds in the greater Edmonton area, 2015. Data Report, D-2016-103, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada. 12 pp + App.

Hurkett, B., and L. Redman. 2016. Swan River Arctic grayling and watercourse crossing assessment. Data Report, D-2016-104, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. 21 pp + App.

Rodtka, M., C. Judd, and A. Clough. 2016. North Saskatchewan River drainage, Fish Sustainability Index data gaps project, 2015. Data Report, D-2016-105, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada. 17 pp + App.

Fitzsimmons, K., and B. Keeling. 2016. Stocked trout survival and camera-based angler survey at selected ACA stocked ponds. Data Report, D-2016-106, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada. 25 pp + App.

Wildlife

Alberta Conservation Association. 2016. Porcupine Hills Restoration Plan. Data Report, D-2016-001, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. 34 pp + App.

Jokinen, M.E., M. Verhage, R. Anderson, and D. Manzer. 2016. Frequency and timing of use of mineral licks by forest ungulates in southwest Alberta. Technical Report, T-2016-101, produced by Alberta Conservation Association, Lethbridge and Blairmore, Alberta, Canada. 33 pp + App.

Report A Poacher and Livestock Compensation Programs

Report A Poacher

Report A Poacher (RAP) encourages all Albertans—not just hunters and anglers—to protect our wildlife, fish and natural habitats. In addition to providing education about poaching, perhaps the most important RAP Program tool is the toll-free phone number: 1-800-642-3800. It allows people to report suspected illegal activities 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Alberta Fish & Wildlife enforcement officers often rely on information from these calls; individuals and communities are RAP's eyes and ears, and the important information they provide regularly lead to investigations and convictions.

RAP is delivered jointly by ACA and Alberta Justice and Solicitor General. ACA is responsible for program promotion and education activities to enhance public awareness and understanding of poaching, and also for the administration of program funds. Alberta Justice and Solicitor General retains sole responsibility for liaising with informants, investigating reports and enforcing laws.

2015/16 Overview

- 11,884 total calls from the public to the RAP toll-free hotline.
- 2,530 calls about suspected illegal activity—reporting fish and wildlife resource crimes.
- 814 charges laid.
- $58,700 in rewards paid to individuals whose call and information led to charges.
- Promoted RAP at numerous trade shows and events throughout Alberta, and distributed branded promotional items to educate and raise awareness about poaching and ethical hunting and fishing practices.
- Increased RAP promotion through social media, television, radio and print.

Livestock Compensation Programs

For producers whose livestock may have been killed or injured as a result of predators (eagles, cougars, bears and wolves) or hunter activities, relief is provided through the Wildlife Predator Compensation and Shot Livestock Compensation Programs. Like Report A Poacher, we are responsible for program promotion and compensation fund management, while Alberta Justice and Solicitor General is responsible for incident investigations and determining payouts.

Wildlife Predator	Claims	Compensation ($)
Eagle	4	2,026.61
Cougar	28	25,891.07
Black Bear	22	36,329.38
Grizzly Bear	72	105,049.63
Wolf	337	569,676.25
Unknown	3	4,640.31
TOTAL	466	743,613.25

Shot Livestock	16	$36,543.17

REPORT A POACHER
www.reportapoacher.com
1-800-642-3800

Project: Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society, Community Watershed Stewardship

Photo: Katie Pearson

Granting Programs

Alberta's hunters and anglers contribute directly to conservation through levies on their hunting and fishing licences. A portion comes to ACA, and one of the many things we do is support community and research efforts via our Granting Programs.

ACA Conservation, Community and Education Grants

This fund supports conservation activities that contribute to fish and wildlife population health and the health of their environments, and to the understanding, appreciation and use of those environments. Projects that increase participation in, and awareness of, outdoor opportunities, while developing knowledge and respect for conservation, are also funded through this grant. The projects ranged from youth hunter, angler, and archery programs and local festivals such as the Camrose Purple Martin Festival and the Snow Goose Chase, to restoration and stewardship projects.

2015/16 Overview

- Received 107 applications requesting just under $1.6 million.
- Supported 74 projects with $901,901 of funding.

ACA Research Grants

The ACA Research Grants fund high-quality research projects on wildlife, fish and habitat which inform the effective management of wildlife, fish populations and habitat in Alberta. Topics ranged from pollinator conservation to long-term population studies on big horn sheep and the elk of Ya Ha Tinda.

2015/16 Overview

- Received 23 applications requesting $625,403.
- Funded 12 research projects with a total of $329,986

Grants in Biodiversity

The ACA Grants in Biodiversity Program is funded by ACA and operated through the Alberta Cooperative Conservation Research Unit—a partnership between the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge. Bees and bears were the species of choice this year as the ACA Grants in Biodiversity program supported 21 graduate student projects with a total of $231,575 of funding for 2015/16. Projects ranged from bee conservation, to use of a wasp as a biocontrol agent, to the prevention of bear-train collisions. A wide range of other topics were funded including deer mating tactics, optimizing forest harvesting to maintain diversity, and the effect of wastewater on native fish. This year's grants ranged from $5,330 to $19,620 and were distributed to six PhD and 15 Masters candidates. Although the field of study must be in Alberta, four of the projects were conducted by universities out of the province with most of the rest being done by the University of Alberta; the University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge also received grants.

2015/16 Overview

- Syncrude Canada Ltd. has signed a $250,000 commitment over five years (2014 through 2018) in support of the ACA Grants in Biodiversity Program

ACA Chair in Fisheries and Wildlife at the University of Alberta

The ACA Chair was established through an endowment to the University of Alberta, providing educational initiatives to wildlife professionals. By addressing issues and problems relevant to Alberta's biological resources, the Chair, Dr. Mark Boyce, supports ACA's goals for long-term, sustainable wildlife and fish resources. A contribution to teaching is also an essential duty of the position. The ACA Chair is expected to contribute to the activities of the Department of Biological Sciences and to the university as a whole. Dr. Boyce's expertise is internationally recognized, and he has significantly enhanced ACA's efforts to conserve Alberta's wildlife and fish resources. For more information and for a list of publications, visit www.biology.ualberta.ca/faculty/mark_boyce.

2015/16 Overview

- Endowed with $20,500 as part of ACA's commitment to science, research and education.

ACA Conservation, Community and Education Grants

Small Grants ($3,000 and under)

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, 12th Annual OWL Day - "Outdoor Wildlife Learning", $3,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Bowhunter education camp, $3,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Instructor recruitment and recertification, $3,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Mobile archery safety training trailer, $3,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Outdoor bound mentorship program handbook, $1,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Outdoor Youth Seminar, $3,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Youth Fishing Initiatives, $3,000.00

Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish), Grazing School for Women: promoting habitat and improved grazing stewardship to livestock producers in south and central Alberta, $3,000.00

Battle River Research Group, Eco-buffer shelterbelt demonstration, $2,900.00

Camrose Wildlife and Stewardship Society, 2015 Camrose Purple Martin Festival, $2,400.00

Edmonton Nature Club, 2015 Snow Goose Chase, $2,000.00

Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society, Community watershed stewardship project 2015: Public awareness/Education, riparian restoration and stewardship, $3,000.00

Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation fishing club, $2,025.00

Helen Schuler Nature Centre, "Extreme by Nature" Environmental education for 11 to 15 year olds, $3,000.00

Lethbridge Fish and Game, Youth fly tying club, $2,960.00

Lone Pine Farming Co, Education through habitat enhancement, $2,000.00

Mundare Fish and Game Association, Junior Fire Arms and Archery Program, $3,000.00

Okotoks and District Fish and Game Association, Jim Graham Park fencing project, $1,500.00

Red Deer River Naturalists, Piper Creek restoration agriculture project's pollinator hotel, $3,000.00

Red Deer Woodchucks (Red Deer Club of the Junior Forest Wardens), Upland bird habitat enhancement with Pheasants Forever, $2,000.00

Safe Drinking Water Foundation, Operation Water Drop and Operation Water Pollution Kits for a C.W. Perry Middle School's field trip, $850.00

Sherwood Park Fish and Game, Monarch butterfly habitat, $750.00

Southern Alberta Bible Camp, Archery curriculum, $2,500.00

Southern Alberta Bible Camp, Pelletry curriculum, $1,500.00

Town of Cochrane, Rainbow trout stocking of Mitford Pond, $1,000.00

Trout Unlimited Canada, Hidden Creek riparian restoration project, $2,400.00

Trout Unlimited Canada, Stewardship license pilot project, $2,390.00

Weaselhead/Glenmore Park Preservation Society, Weaselhead Invasive Plant Program, $3,000.00

Willingdon and District Fish and Game Association, Willingdon Fish Pond and Park, $1,700.00

Large Grants (over $3,000)

Alberta Envirothon, Alberta Envirothon Annual Provincial High-School Competition, $3,000.00

Alberta Fish and Game Association, Can livestock production support sustainability of Prairie wildlife? Assessing local and landscape scale requirements using monitoring, adaptive management, and ecological goods and services analyses, $39,750.00

Alberta Fish and Game Association, Pronghorn antelope migration corridor enhancement, $35,675.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, 22nd Annual Outdoor Women's Program, $25,080.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, AHEIA's National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), $31,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Conservation education instructor's guide, $12,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Essential Series' Online Education Programs: Field Technique Essentials, $20,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Outdoor Bound Mentorship Program, $12,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Provincial Hunting Day Initiatives, $21,000.00

Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association, Youth Hunter Education Camp (Weeks 1,2,3,4), $48,000.00

Alberta Hunters Who Care, Wild game for the food bank project, $12,000.00

Alberta Invasive Species Council, PlayCleanGo implementation, $20,000.00

Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society (Cows and Fish), Developing westslope cutthroat trout riparian habitat improvement action plans and implementing habitat management improvements, $5,000.00

Alberta Trappers Association – Peace River, Trapper training and education, $4,460.00

Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area, Protect your Watershed: Riparian area protection project, $25,000.00

Beaverhill Bird Observatory, Wildlife conservation, monitoring and public engagement at Beaverhill Lake, $19,900.00

Calgary Bird Banding Society, Cypress Hills landbird monitoring station, $25,400.00

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – Northern Alberta, Mapping and identifying best practices for caribou range planning in Northwestern Alberta, $21,170.00

Foothills Restoration Forum, Foothills Restoration Forum outreach and education: Range Health Assessment Training and Fall Information Session, $11,330.00

Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, 2015 Vegetation management at Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, $7,000.00

Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, Bearspaw trail buildout, $20,000.00

Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation, Environmental education at Glenbow Ranch Provincial Park, $4,960.00

Highway Two Conservation, Riparian Education Program, $11,900.00

Kneehill County, Fyten reservoir rehabilitation, $10,000.00

Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory, Avian Monitoring and Education Programs at Lesser Slave Lake, $26,000.00

Lethbridge Fish and Game, 5th Annual LFGA/ ACA youth fishing recruitment day, $6,800.00

Lethbridge Fish and Game, LFGA - Conservation Community and Education Program, $24,000.00

Mountain View County, Ecological and Riparian Enhancement Fund, $20,000.00

Nature Alberta, Living by Water, $36,516.00

Nature Alberta, Promoting beneficial management practices for maintaining bird habitat and decreasing bird mortality in urban and rural Alberta, $18,300.00

Nature Alberta, The Young Naturalists Club of Alberta, $30,000.00

Northern Lights Fly Tyers/TUC Edmonton Chpt, Conserving and restoring Arctic grayling in the Upper Pembina River Watershed - Habitat restoration planning, $21,500.00

Parkland County, Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS), $37,900.00

Parkland School Division #70, Parkland youth wetlands stewardship project, $19,500.00

Partners in Habitat Development c/o Eastern Irrigation District, Partners in Habitat Development, $15,000.00

Pheasants Forever Calgary, 14th annual youth/novice shoot, $7,000.00

Red Deer County, Conservation Partners, $40,000.00

Riverlot 56 Natural Area Society, Stage 2: 2015 re-naturalization of Riverlot 56 disturbed spaces, $12,500.00

Rocky Mountain Wilderness Society, Trail clearing Big Grave to Monoghan Creek, $14,000.00

Southern Alberta Bible Camp, Walleye – Pike fishing, $4,200.00

Taber Christian School, TCS outdoor education archery equipment project, $4,000.00

The King's University College, Faith-based organizations and conservation: engaging volunteers in recovery plans of endangered pines, $4,985.00

Town of Sylvan Lake, Golf Course Creek wetland biofilter restoration, $3,700.00

Trout Unlimited Canada, Understanding fish, water and conservation, $12,500.00

Trout Unlimited Canada, Yellow Fish Road, $30,000.00

ACA Research Grants

University of Calgary (Dr. Massolo), The distribution of the European strain of *Echinococcus multilocularis* in Alberta, $32,856.00

University of Alberta (Dr. Boyce), Effects of industry on wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) ecology in the boreal forest of northern Alberta, $68,138.00

University of Calgary (Dr. Galpern), Wild pollinator conservation and restoration in Southern Alberta croplands: tests of neonictinoid and habitat change, $22,700.00

Université de Sherbrooke (Dr. Festa-Bianchet), Experimental management of bighorn sheep, $9,360.00

University of Alberta (Dr. Paszkowski), Microhabitat selection by western toads (*Anaxyus boreas*) in north-central Alberta, $13,200.00

University of Alberta (Dr. Harshaw), Evaluating prairie waterfowl hunter recruitment and retention, $26,126.00

University of Calgary (Dr. Gilleard), Genetic origins, diversity and parasitology of Alberta's feral (wild) horses, $35,262.00

University of Calgary (Dr. Gilch), Analysis of polymorphisms in the prion protein of Alberta caribou as an indicator of their susceptibility to Chronic Wasting Disease, $16,500.00

University of Alberta (Dr. Merrill), Persistence of the Ya Ha Tinda elk population: the role of calf survival, $29,386.00

University of Alberta (Dr. Boyce), In paradise or peril? Using bear rubs to understand black bear populations in southwestern Alberta, $25,000.00

University of Manitoba (Dr. Fraser), Determining range-wide influences on breeding productivity of declining migratory songbirds in Alberta, $24,458.00

University of Alberta (Dr. Poesch), Paleolimnological reconstruction of westslope cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi*) in alpine lakes, $27,000.00

2015 ACA Grants in Biodiversity Recipients

Syncrude Canada Ltd. has committed $250,000 over five years (2014 - 2018) to support the ACA Grants in Biodiversity.

Recipient	Institution	Supervisor(s)	Project Title
Jason Airst (MSc)	University of Winnipeg	Susan Lingle	Variation in male mating tactics in mule deer and white-tailed deer
Oscar Aleuy (PhD)	University of Calgary	Kathreen Ruckstuhl	Refining and testing predictive models for host-parasite interactions in a changing climate: the case of *Marshallegia marshalliand* its latitudinal plasticity in thermal tolerance
Jonathan Backs (PhD)	University of Alberta	John Nychka & Colleen Cassady St. Clair	Development of reliable warning signals for the prevention of bear-train collisions
Zach Dempsey (MSc)	University of Lethbridge	Theresa Burg & Cameron Goater	Phylogeography and systematics of Oreohelid land snails in Southern Alberta
Catherine Denny (MSc)	University of Alberta	Scott Nielsen	Spatial patterns of food resources and the movement patterns of grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos*)
Paulson Des Brisay (MSc)	University of Manitoba	Nicola Koper	Determining the effects of oil infrastructure on the demography and stress physiology of the Chestnut-collard Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*)
Laureen Echiverri (MSc)	University of Alberta	Ellen Macdonald	Optimizing partial harvesting for understory plant diversity
Barbara Gass (MSc)	University of British Columbia	Amy Angert	Relating needle traits to rust resistance in Limber Pine
Anjolene Hunt (MSc)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Habitat use of Canada Warblers in an extensively managed forest landscape
Stefan Hupperts (MSc)	University of Alberta	Simon Landhausser	Shifts in lifestyles of ectomycorrhizal fungi: Does host tree phenology induce facultative saprotrophy?
Rola Kutby (PhD)	University of Calgary	Ralph Cartar	Determinants of reproductive success in bumble bees of Foothills forests
Analisa Lazaro-Cote (MSc)	University of Calgary	Leland Jackson	The impact of municipal wastewater effluent on the stress response of native fish in the Bow River
Caitlin Mader (MSc)	University of Alberta	Nadir Erbilgin	Ecology and phenology of a resident Aphelinid wasp *(Coccophagus sp.)* and evaluation of its potential as a biocontrol agent of European elm scale *(Eriococcus spurius)*
Limoilou-Amelie Renaud (PhD)	Universite de Sherbrooke	Fanie Pelletier	Implications of phenotypic plasticity and maternal effects for the dynamics of a declining population of bighorn sheep
Matthew Robinson (MSc)	University of Alberta	Scott Nielsen	Influence of variable retention timber harvesting on upland habitat and population dynamics of wood frogs (*Lithobates sylvaticus*)
Zhuoyan Song (PhD)	University of Alberta	Heather Proctor	Disentangling the Gammarus-acanthocephalan system in Edmonton wetlands from ecological and molecular perspectives
Janet Sperling (PhD)	University of Alberta	Katharine Magor	Microbiome diversity of ticks ectoparasitic on Alberta wildlife
Eric Spilker (MSc)	University of Alberta	Evie Merrill	Spatial interactions in multi-carnivore communities in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta
Ashton Sturm (MSc)	University of Alberta	Cameron Carlyle	Bee conservation in Alberta's grasslands; Developing measures of bee diversity and abundance with an indicator taxa
Riley Waytes (MSc)	University of Calgary	Ralph Cartar	Insect-mediated cross-pollination in hybrid seed canola: Contributions of native bees and their influence on managed pollinators
Scott Wilson (MSc)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Monitoring bird use of reclaimed well sites using autonomous recording units

Auditor's Report

Photo: A.C.A. Colin Eyo

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June 11, 2016
Edmonton, Alberta

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Alberta Conservation Association

The accompanying summary consolidated financial statements, which comprise the summary consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2016, and the summary results from consolidated statement of operations for the year then ended, are derived from the audited consolidated financial statements of the Alberta Conservation Association for the year ended March 31, 2016. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those consolidated financial statements in our report dated June 11, 2016.

The summary consolidated financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of Alberta Conservation Association.

Management's Responsibility for the Summarized Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of a summary of the audited consolidated financial statements on the basis described in Note 1.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary consolidated financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements."

Opinion

In our opinion, the summary consolidated financial statements derived from the audited consolidated financial statements of Alberta Conservation Association for the year ended March 31, 2016 are a fair summary of those consolidated financial statements, on the basis described in Note 1. However, the summary consolidated financial statements are subject to conditions equivalent to those of the audited consolidated financial statements of the Alberta Conservation Association for the year ended March 31, 2016, upon which we issued a qualified audit opinion.

In addition, in common with many not-for-profit organizations, the Association derives some of its revenue from partner contributions and donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of these revenues was limited to the amount recorded in the records of the Association and we were not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to partner contributions, excess of revenue over expenses, current assets, deferred contributions and net assets.

Kingston Ross Pasnak LLP

Kingston Ross Pasnak LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants

ALBERTA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
Summarized Consolidated Statement of Operations
For the Year Ended March 31, 2016

	2016	2015
REVENUE		
Levy, fees and assessments	$ 14,225,606	$ 12,000,276
Partner contributions	1,479,313	1,228,626
Miscellaneous	319,630	110,179
Investment income	233,653	660,937
Donations	28,047	105,056
Film sales	663	-
	16,286,912	14,105,074
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries and benefits	7,008,883	6,275,491
Contracted services	2,287,960	1,523,775
Grants	1,712,844	1,545,874
Materials and supplies	1,458,451	858,368
Travel	449,231	317,991
Rentals	388,326	370,716
Repairs and maintenance	315,145	179,780
Amortization	289,729	323,048
Office	250,440	208,617
Advertising	230,954	242,213
Fuel and lubricants	172,206	185,131
Landowner agreements	157,741	161,738
Telephone and communications	136,565	123,921
Insurance	123,647	135,851
Freight and postage	115,343	68,405
Interest on loans	75,705	108,042
Training and membership	49,397	42,840
Utilities	45,721	56,533
Fees, licenses and permits	38,622	35,430
Bank charges and interest	37,381	42,718
Hosting and conferences	13,593	14,130
Bad debts	-	252
	15,357,884	12,820,864
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	929,028	1,284,210
OTHER REVENUES (EXPENDITURES)		
Gain (loss) on sale of investments	139,722	(107,563)
(Loss) gain on disposal of property and equipment	(4,015)	40,171
Unrealized loss on investments	(433,281)	(29,512)
Write-off of aeration equipment	(442,532)	-
	(740,106)	(96,904)
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$ 188,922	$ 1,187,306

ALBERTA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Summarized Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2016

	2016	2015
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	$ 270,705	$ 602,143
Short term investments	237,502	156,069
Accounts receivable	475,039	350,363
Inventory	8,204	10,584
Goods and Services Tax recoverable	68,013	67,539
Prepaid expenses	114,069	76,488
	1,173,532	1,263,186
LONG TERM INVESTMENTS	6,516,728	6,107,697
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT	24,964,703	23,350,400
FILM COLLECTION	3,023,870	3,023,870
	$ 35,678,833	$ 33,745,153
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Bank indebtedness	$ 330,000	$ 325,000
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,074,475	1,678,352
Deferred contributions	2,761,994	2,183,592
Deposits	35,638	28,791
Term loans	2,240,000	2,735,097
	7,442,107	6,950,832
PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS	1,474,293	1,474,293
	8,916,400	8,425,125
NET ASSETS		
Invested in property and equipment	26,514,280	24,899,975
Internally restricted	194,183	147,333
Unrestricted	53,970	272,720
	26,762,433	25,320,028
	$ 35,678,833	$ 33,745,153

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

_____ *Director*

_____ *Director*

Financial Highlights

Summarized Financial Statements

In 2015/16, ACA received $14,225,606 in levy revenue from hunting and angling licences, a $2,225,330 increase from the previous year. This continual upward trend in levy revenue demonstrates strong interest in hunting and angling in Alberta and additionally reflects the increase in licence levies that occurred in April 2015.

Together, our Wildlife, Fisheries, Land Management, Communications and Grants Programs had expenditures totalling $12,067,803, plus an additional $1,475,691 in land purchases and donations (for accounting purposes, these funds are recorded as assets, not direct operational expenditures). These numbers mean approximately 95.2 percent of the levy value collected went back into conserving Alberta's resources (expenses plus increase in habitat assets).

ACA received approximately $3.5 million in non-levy revenue (including $1,322,541 in land donations and funds for land purchase). These funds came from a variety of donors, including individuals, corporations, granting foundations, the federal government and other conservation organizations.

Administrative costs were held to 14.2 percent of total operating revenue (including funds for land purchase and donations).

Expenditures by Program

Often stakeholders want to determine what funds are being directed towards their particular passion. When examining the Expenditures by Program, please keep in mind that the numbers shown are somewhat arbitrary and do not necessarily represent all projects that may relate to a particular program area. For instance, fisheries access sites, which are directly related to increasing angling opportunities, are administered, and budgeted for, under our Land Management Program instead of the Fisheries Program.

The Report A Poacher and Livestock Compensation Program expenditures are included within Wildlife, Fisheries, and Land Management Programs, based on the specific expenditure. Granting is shown separately even though it relates to all three resource areas. Administration costs continue to be well below the federal guideline for charitable organizations and includes areas such as Human Resources and regional and corporate administration.

Revenue by Source

Approximately 22 percent of ACA's total operating budget was generated from non-levy sources ($3,536,997). This decrease from the previous year was largely attributable to decreased corporate donations relative to 2014/15 resulting from unfavorable economic conditions. Land donations and purchases in 2015/16 conserved approximately 1,181 acres for future generations.

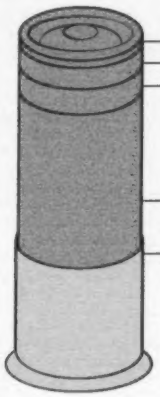
2015/16 Overview

- Received $14,225,606 from levies on hunting and fishing licences.
- Received $3.5 million in non-levy revenue.
- Applied $13,543,494 in value directly towards the conservation of Alberta's wildlife, fish and habitats.
- Administration costs kept to 14.2 percent of revenue.
- Current year surplus is $188,922 (1.06 percent of budgeted revenue), of which $293,559 are losses generated within our long-term investment accounts (not in management control).

The following charts summarize the total operating budget breakdown according to each program and revenue area. We encourage you to review the entire annual report for a greater understanding of the conservation projects undertaken within each program and how they may relate to your particular interests. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our President and CEO, Todd Zimmerling.

Revenue by Source

Percentage of Revenue

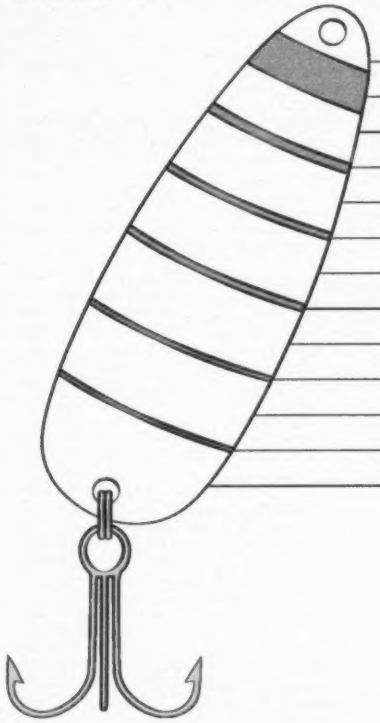


	Total Dollars
Other	571,993
Land purchases/donations	1,475,692
Partner	1,489,313
Hunting	8,531,273
Fishing	5,694,333
TOTAL	17,762,604

*Not including unrealized gains on investments, but including $564,000 in investment income (outside of Management's control).

Expenditures by Program

Percentage of Expenditures



	Levy	Partner	Total Dollars
Communications	827,932	376,583	1,204,515
Finance	692,717	243,796	936,513
Land purchases/donations	153,150	1,322,541	1,475,691
Information Technology	438,286	-	438,286
Granting Programs	1,693,224	50,000	1,743,224
Report A Poacher and Compensation	289,507	370	289,877
Land Programs	1,954,325	387,131	2,341,456
Business Development	286,076	8,185	294,261
Fisheries Program	2,124,231	101,782	2,226,013
Human Resources	267,567	-	267,567
Administration	2,430,504	65,263	2,495,767
Health and Safety	145,666	-	145,666
Wildlife Program	2,733,501	981,346	3,714,847
TOTAL	14,036,686	3,536,997	17,573,683

Alberta Conservation Association wishes to thank our Corporate Partners in Conservation who have provided multi-year financial contributions in support our conservation programs and projects. Together we are conserving Alberta's natural heritage for generations to come.

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Agrium
Aqualitx Environmental
Aux Sable
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Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows
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Martin Motor Sports
Matrix Solutions Inc.
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Shell Canada Ltd.
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Alberta Conservation Association

Conserving Alberta's Wild Side

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